

SPECTACULAR **EPISODE II** BEHIND-THE-SCENES PIX!

STAR WARS[®] INSIDER

TOPDECK PRESENTS

SAMUEL L. JACKSON
MACE WINDU
FIGHTS!

SILAS CARSON
KI-ADI-MUNDI & NUTE GUNRAY
STRIKE BACK!

THE MUPPET SHOW
MOST SENSATIONAL,
INSPIRATIONAL,
CELEBRATIONAL,
MUPPETATIONAL

EPISODE I
DVD UPDATE!
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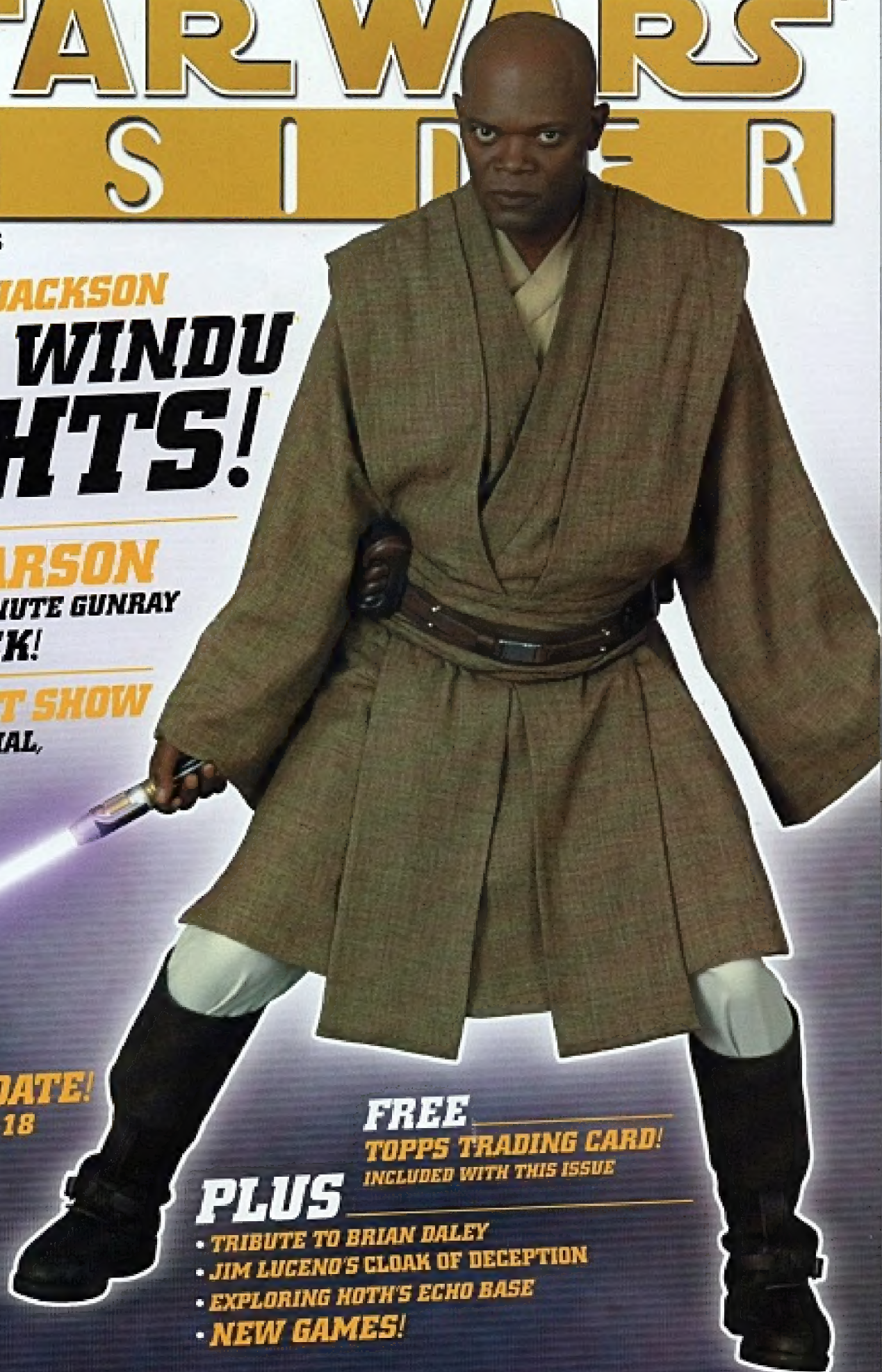
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Mace Windu was all talk in Episode I. In the next film, he has the bad guys shakin' in their boots — and no one is more thrilled than Samuel Jackson.

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FROM TOPP'S TO YOU

Exclusive Obi-Wan Kenobi trading card from Topps. If you like this, check out the new Star Wars Revolution collector's set, in stores soon!



ON THE COVER

Jedi Master Mace Windu returns in Episode II. Samuel L. Jackson talks about kicking butt and taking numbers in the forthcoming Star Wars prequel.

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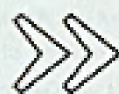
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Editor-in-Chief Chris Perkins reveals in the dark side. He walks to the pace of the Imperial March, he shoves his head in deference to Darth Maul, and he collects stuffed ewoks. How evil is that?



YUMMY IS THE DARK SIDE

PLUS: THE GALAXY UNFOLDS IN *STAR WARS GAMER* MAGAZINE!



If you're a devoted *Star Wars* fan, you already know that Wizards of the Coast publishes not one, but TWO bi-monthly *Star Wars* magazines: *Insider* and *Gamer*. *Insider* is your behind-the-scenes look at the feature films, the Lucasfilm legacy, and the whole *Star Wars* phenomenon. *Gamer* is all about the games, from *Star Wars* RPGs and CCGs to LucasArts electronic games.

The magazines' schedules alternate so that if you subscribe to BOTH you get a magazine every single month. The altruistic *Star Wars* devotee in me says "We did it for the fans!" The hard-nosed editor-in-chief in me says "We did it for our sanity." As it happens, both magazines are put together by the same cadre of Jedi Academy rejects, pit droids, and New Republic refugees. Because our team produces both magazines, what's to stop us from cross-promoting the magazines and using one to heighten your awareness of the other? It's not shameless; it's wizard.

Take the dark side, for instance.

This issue's "Gamescape" column gives you a behind-the-scenes glimpse at the making of *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, the first role-playing game product to unlock the sinister secrets of the Sith. Not coincidentally, the next issue of *Star Wars Gamer* will provide additional RPG game material to further enhance your "darksider" characters and send those Jedi packing for the Outer Rim territories. *Gamer* #5 also includes an original short story by *The Dark Side Sourcebook*'s lead designer, Bill Slavicsek (author of *A Guide to the Star Wars Universe*, published by Del Rey).

If you're reluctant to explore the dark side—if it terrifies you more than a *Star Wars* special starring Bea Arthur—then here's another reason to check out *Gamer* #5: the poster-sized map of the *Star Wars* galaxy. This beautiful map has appeared nowhere else and includes all of your favorite worlds from the various *Star Wars* eras. Which planet is farthest from the bright center of the galaxy? Guess what—it ain't Tatooine.

(That farm boy Luke don't know nuthin'!) Where is Naboo in relation to Neimoidia? And where in the galaxy is Aduba-3? For answers to these questions and more, see the *Gamer* galaxy map. If you stumble upon a world you don't recognize, let us know! We can tell you all about it in a future issue of *Insider*. After all, helping you navigate the *Star Wars* galaxy is what we're all about.

We treat *Insider* and *Gamer* like siblings (code-named "Luke" and "Leia"). We want them to play nice together. So, expect to see some clever "crossovers." Like the dark side, it'll be sweet and yummy and good for us all.

Chris Perkins

Chris Perkins, Editor-in-Chief



STAR WARS

INSIDER

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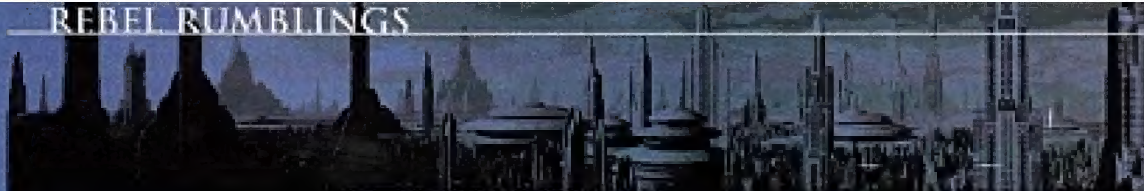
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We have more letters than you can shake a gaffi stick at. Here are some of our recent favorites:

THE MEDAL'S IN THE MAIL

Enough about why Chewbacca did or did not receive a medal at the closing of Star Wars. What I'd like to know is why the other three surviving pilots were not at the ceremony. As I see it, they were facing the same risks Luke was facing, took the same chances, and fought just as hard and just as bravely. Did they have their medals mailed to them, or what?

When George Lucas does the DVD of Star Wars, my hope is that he digitally adds three more actors to the awards ceremony to represent these men.

ROBERT ANDRES
Sacramento, CA

Did these hero wannabes blow up the Death Star? No. Did they send Darth Vader spinning off into space? No. Did they dress up as stormtroopers to win the heart of the fair Princess Leia? No. They should be happy they got any screen time at all.

Still, we're cool with the idea of adding some actors to the award ceremony. We pick Lloyd Bridges, Jon Voight, and Jason Robards. Sure, two of them are dead, but ILM can do anything.

THE DWEBB

The only alien missing in *The Essential Guide To Alien Species* is the ultimate Star Wars creature: the Dwebb!

I. M. JEDI
via email

Dweeb is commonplace here at Wizards of the Coast HQ. As it happens, I speak Dwebb. In fact, I'm speaking Dwebb right now.

MY COUSIN BIGGS

Hey, what's up? I just wanted to let you know that I found a mistake in the Star Wars Encyclopedia, and I don't want some rookie scholar of the Star Wars Universe to read it and get all bent out of shape.

Under the heading of "Gavin Darklighter," it says Gavin was the cousin of Rogue Squadron legend Biggs Darklighter, but Rogue Squadron was created after the Battle of Yavin, where Biggs was killed. Though Biggs gave his life for a legendary cause, he didn't do it under the title of a Rogue Squadron member. You have to stay on top of these things, you know!

Keep up the great work. The magazine is awesome!

AARON MATTHEW VOYLES
Yucaipa, CA

Rookie scholars take note: Biggs Darklighter didn't really "give" his life for a legendary cause. In truth, he had the power cells blown out of him. We've asked around, and we're pretty sure it wasn't a conscious decision on his part.

RAISING INDIANA

I am a dedicated Indiana Jones fan. I first experienced *Raiders of the Lost Ark* as a wide-eyed third-grader back in 1986. From the first time that I saw Indy

reclaim the golden idol and outrun the boulder in the Temple of the Warriors, I knew that he was the coolest person in the world.

After reading *The Empire Strikes Back* twentieth anniversary issue last year, I knew that Insider had to honor *Raiders* in the same way. I was thrilled to see Issue #54's *Raiders of the Lost Ark* "20th Anniversary Special" previewed in the back of Insider #53! Finally, Indiana Jones fans can rejoice.

For those of us who know nearly every detail of the making of this film, you should have some new insights and behind-the-scenes photos, as well as updates and interviews with the main production staff. I have seen *The Making of Raiders of the Lost Ark* so many times that I feel as if I was there at EMI Elstree Studios in 1980. Lastly, what an opportunity to discuss *Raiders* with Star Wars archaeologist David West Reynolds and talk about his trip to Tunisia, where he rediscovered the original filming sites. I'm interested in seeing how Kairouan looks today.

Being a fan of Indiana Jones has taken me on a few adventures of my own. In 1995, I wrote a fan letter to Harrison Ford, which was rewarded by a phone call from the actor to thank me for being such a dedicated fan, as well as earning me an autographed *Raiders of the Lost Ark* poster, which has become one of my most treasured possessions. I also

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 90

WANNA RUMBLE?

Write to: REBEL RUMBLINGS, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057, or e-mail SWInsider@wizards.com. Letters may be edited for clarity and space considerations. All mail MUST include your full name and home city. Star Wars Insider is not responsible for any unsolicited material received. This is not the address for Lucasfilm casting. Due to time constraints and the volume of letters received, individual responses are unfortunately not possible. Afraid I was going to leave without giving you a good-bye kiss?



EPISODE II PREQUEL UPDATE

CONDUCTED IN APRIL 2001

BY DAN MADSEN

OF THE LOCATIONS YOU HAVE SHOT IN FOR EPISODE II, WHICH IS YOUR FAVORITE?

I really enjoyed working out of Australia. I thought it was a fantastic experience. We met a whole new shooting crew who are great people. It was a wonderful environment to shoot in. We're very excited about going back there for Episode III. We had an enormous amount of fun. They were a very collaborative group of people. That, for me, was the most fun of all the locations we have gone to. After Australia, Tunisia, for me, is fabulous. There is still something that happens to me every time I go to Tunisia and hit the desert. When you get there and then you drive 40 to 50 miles out in the desert and you are completely isolated from anything - it is just magic to me. It is a very special country.

RICK, FOR YOU, WHICH OF THE CHARACTERS IN EPISODE II DO YOU FEEL ARE THE MOST INTERESTING?

Well, certainly, for me, it would be Anakin and Amidala. There is no question. I think they really work well together on screen. I enjoyed watching them work every day. Hayden is a really special boy. It will be interesting to see what he does with Anakin in Episode III. Although he's not even thinking of that right now. He's 19 years old—each day is a new day for him.

HOW MANY YEARS AFTER EPISODE I DOES THIS FILM TAKE PLACE?

10 years.

WAS SECURITY AS TIGHT AT EALING AS IT HAS BEEN AT THE OTHER STUDIOS?

Well, we're working at a place that hasn't been a real film studio for a long time. It was owned by the BBC for dozens of years and there was no such thing as real intense security. But we're teaching them what security is very quickly.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST SURPRISE FOR YOU AFTER ALL THE YEARS AND EXPERIENCES SINCE YOU STARTED WORKING ON THE STAR WARS SPECIAL EDITIONS, THEN EPISODE I, AND NOW EPISODE II?

Well, I've been involved with *Star Wars* now for six years and I think the thing that surprises me and amazes me the most is that it has never once been boring! Every day is a new challenge, and every week or month there is some new mountain to climb.

I KNOW YOU CAN'T PREDICT THE FUTURE, BUT THESE FILMS WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO GO DOWN AS SOME OF THE MOST COMPLEX MOVIES YOU WILL EVER BE INVOLVED WITH IN YOUR CAREER.

They are the most complex films ever made so, for a while, these will be the benchmark for all films to beat. They are not the most difficult but certainly the most complicated.

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

[FACING, LEFT] Fresh lipstick is applied between shots to Natalie Portman during the shooting of Episode II in Australia. Photo by Sue Adler.

[FACING, RIGHT] Padmé Amidala (played by Natalie Portman) seems radiant even in working-class clothing. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti.

[THIS PAGE] The Chancellor's Guards are sporting a new look in Episode II, a much more chilling fashion for fans of the Star Wars saga. Photo by Sue Adler.



[ABOVE] Chancellor's aide Sly Moore is played by Sandi Finlay. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti.

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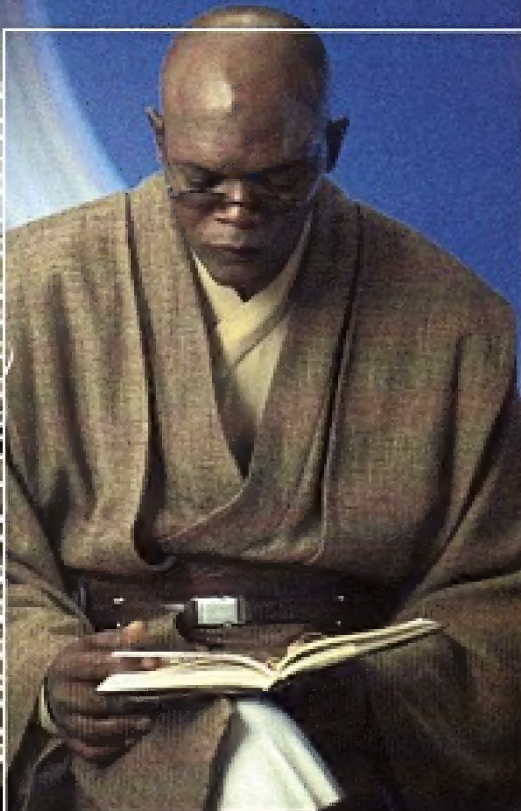
WITH RICK McCALLUM
[PRODUCER]



[ABOVE] Anakin Skywalker (actor Hayden Christensen) is illuminated by the glow of a lightsaber. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti.

"I LIKE ANYTHING THAT TAKES A LOOK AT THE WORLD WE LIVE IN AND SPINS IT COMPLETELY AROUND AND THEN CREATES AN ENVIRONMENT OR A WORLD THAT HELPS TO DRAMATIZE, ILLUMINATE, AND ILLUSTRATE WHO WE ARE."

—RICK McCALLUM



[THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP] A print version of the Jedi Mace Windu (actor Samuel L. Jackson) reading between shots on an Australian soundstage? Photo by Lisa Tomasetti. » Ten years have passed, but it isn't difficult for Anakin Skywalker (played by Hayden Christensen) to retrace his steps in Mos Espa. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti. » Getting last minute instructions from ground control? Director George Lucas gives Jedi pilot actor Ewan McGregor a briefing on what reactions he is seeking in the next shot aboard the one-man starfighter. Photo by Sue Adler. » Jedi Obi-Wan Kenobi (actor Ewan McGregor) and Captain Typho (actor Jay Logan) step off a speeder bus on Coruscant. Photo by Sue Adler.



» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

WHAT OTHER FANTASY SCIENCE FICTION FILMS OR TELEVISION DO YOU LIKE?

I think the *X-Files* is really well done and I like *Millennium* as well. I don't know, I don't watch much television. But with films, I like 2001 and *Planet of the Apes* and the original *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. I like anything that takes a look at the world we live in and spins it completely around and then creates an environment or a world that helps to dramatize, illuminate, and illustrate who we are. That, to me,

is the essential driving theme of science fiction. If *Star Wars* just took place in our every day world it would not be anywhere near as fascinating or as easy for us to identify who we are and what we aspire to. But, by being placed in a different imaginary world, it helps focus you on who you are, the myths that we live by, the code that we live by, and those things, in terms of storytelling, are absolutely fascinating.

WHEN YOU GO OUT IN PUBLIC, FANS NOW RECOGNIZE YOU. WHAT IS THE MOST FREQUENT QUESTION YOU GET ASKED?

The most frequent question I get asked when people recognize me is "can I borrow some money?!" (Laughter)

HAVE YOU AND GEORGE STARTED TALKING ABOUT EPISODE III YET?

It's funny you should ask that because George and I just started talking about Episode III a few days ago. He outlined to me when he wants the art department to start, when he wants to start writing the script, etc. As soon as we finish the next cut, which will be around mid-June, he is going to start meeting every



[ABOVE] Director George Lucas and Assistant Director James McTeigue get ready for a shot on the Mos Espa location set in Tunisia. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti.

week with the art department to begin preparation on Episode III and then, hopefully, he'll start writing the script.

HOW MUCH ARE YOU INVOLVED IN THE MARKETING OF THESE FILMS?

The basic marketing is under the leadership of Jim Ward, but he puts all his ideas through George and we see everything that comes through. We are part of the collaborative process. Jim is very creative in terms of ideas and what the images should be, and he takes what we've done and presents us with trailers and everything else that shapes the marketing of it.

DOES EVERY FILM NEED A MESSAGE OR CAN IT JUST BE PURE ENTERTAINMENT?



No, I think all great entertainment does have a message. It's subtle but it can be very, very powerful.

HOW WILL EPISODE II BE RELEASED AROUND THE WORLD? WILL IT BE LIKE LAST TIME WHERE ITS OPENING WILL BE STAGGERED AROUND THE WORLD?

Yes, I think it will open at different times around the world. It's very hard to be able to do 35 or 40 different languages all at the same time. We won't finish the film until next March or April and then it goes straight into printing for its May release. It's very hard to do complicated sub-titles in that short of time.

WHAT ARE YOU ALLOWED TO TELL US ABOUT CHRISTOPHER LEE?

All I can tell you is that he is a consummate gentleman, a wonderful person to work with. We really had a great time having him come and visit us in Australia. He is great in the film.

FOR YOU, WHAT IS THE ABSOLUTE BEST PART OF PRODUCING THESE MOVIES?

[LEFT] A Jedi starfighter, its "wedgie" shape inspired by the much larger Imperial Star Destroyers, lies near completion at a workshop at Fox Studios Australia. [BELOW] An overhead shot shows the Jedi starfighter on a red, rocky surface. The blue circle is where the dome of an astromech droid, R4-P17, will be inserted later. Both photos by Sue Adler.



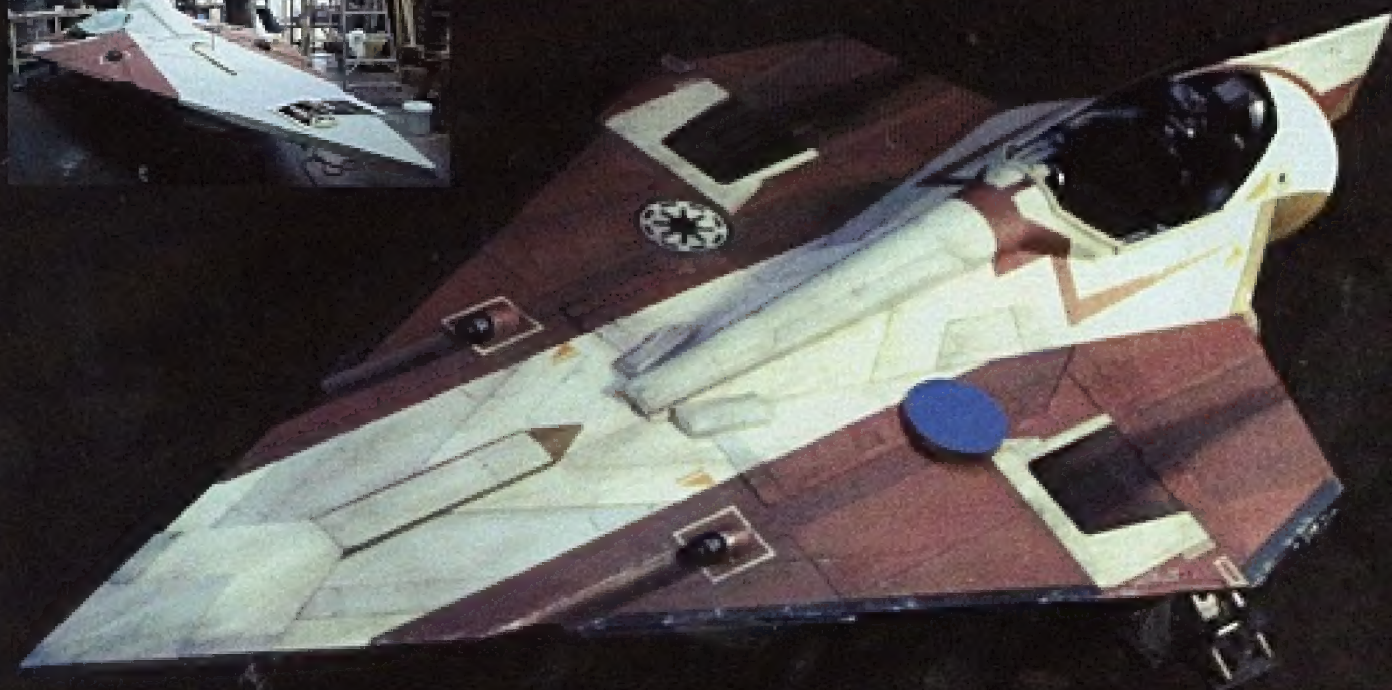
[ABOVE] Padmé Amidala (actress Natalie Portman) seems composed and even a bit amused as others sit in judgement. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti.

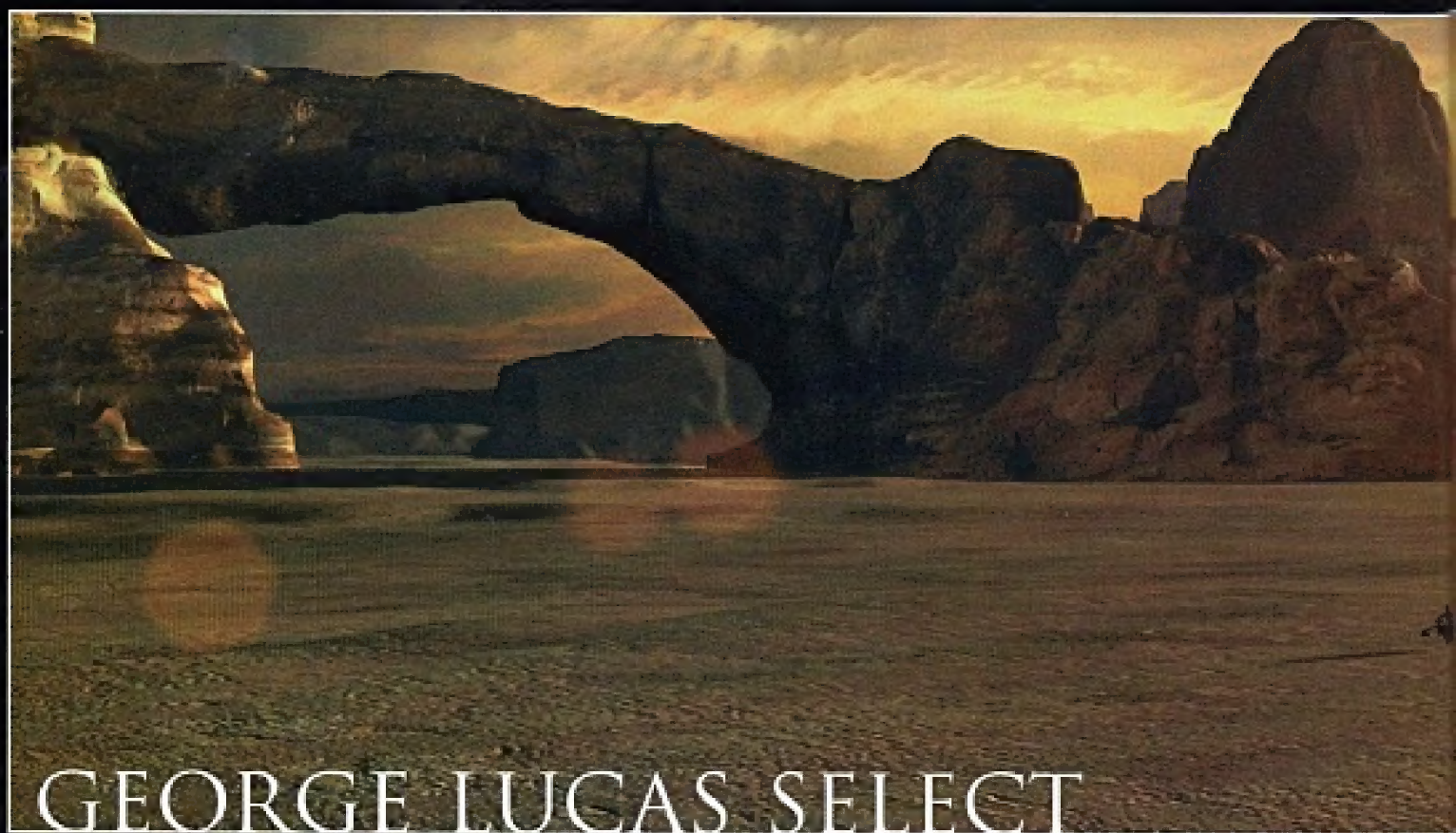
For me, it's the sheer size of them. The sheer scope of them. The sheer complexity of them. You can't rest because no matter how much experience you have had, each day presents a new challenge and I thrive on that.

IF YOU HAD TO DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN, IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD CHANGE?

I would listen to my mother and continue my higher education in another line of business! (Laughter)

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GEORGE LUCAS SELECT

[IMAGES HAND-PICKED BY THE DIRECTOR]



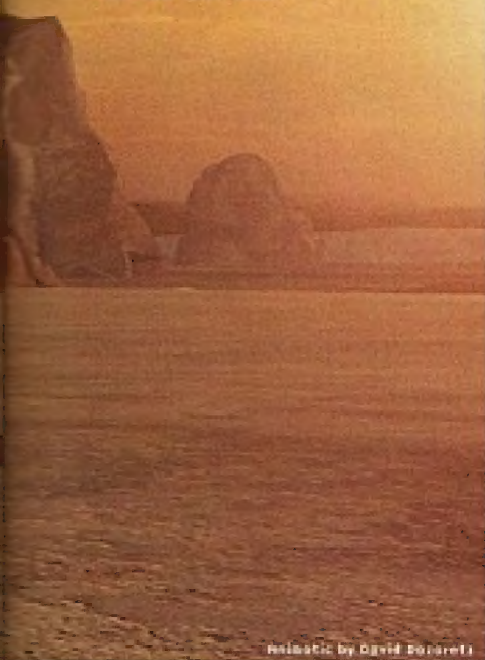
Photo by Paul Filler



Photo by Sue Miller



While George Lucas is making Episode II, he wants to share some personally selected moments of the process with Star Wars fans. These photos first appeared on the official web site, www.starwars.com. They appear here in an enhanced, printed version for the first time.



Animatic by David Bonareti



Photo by Jason Snell



Animatic by Matthew Ward

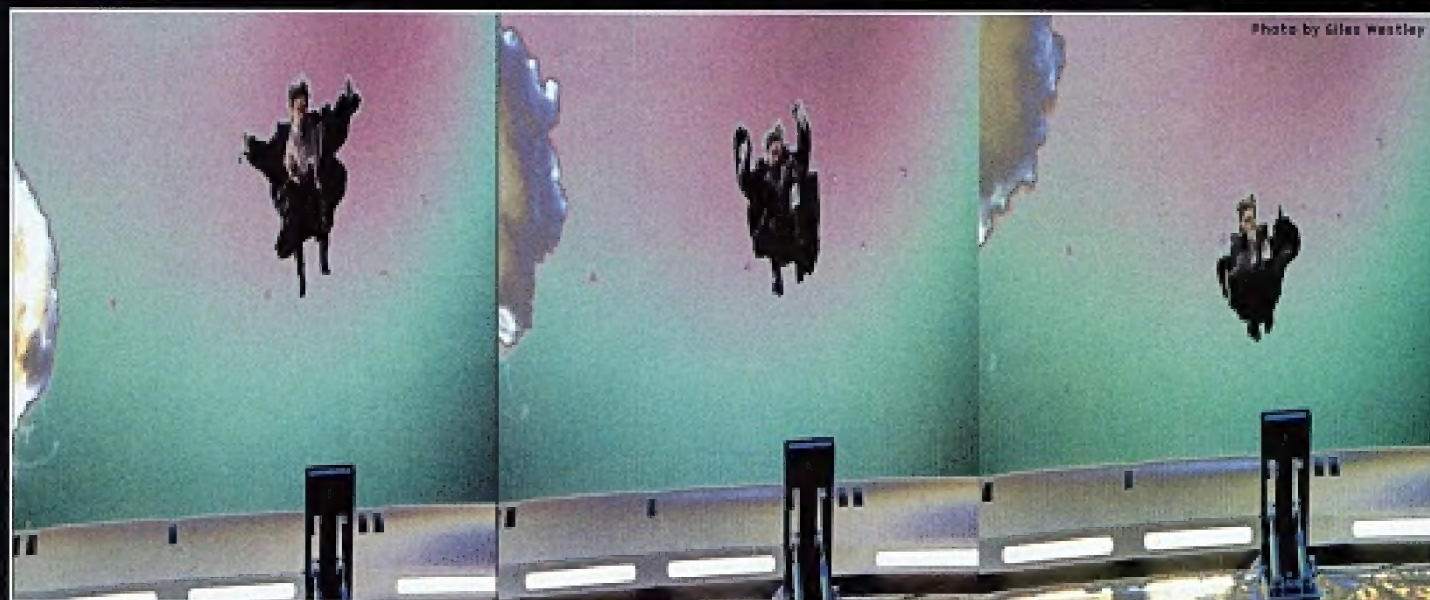


Photo by Giles Westley

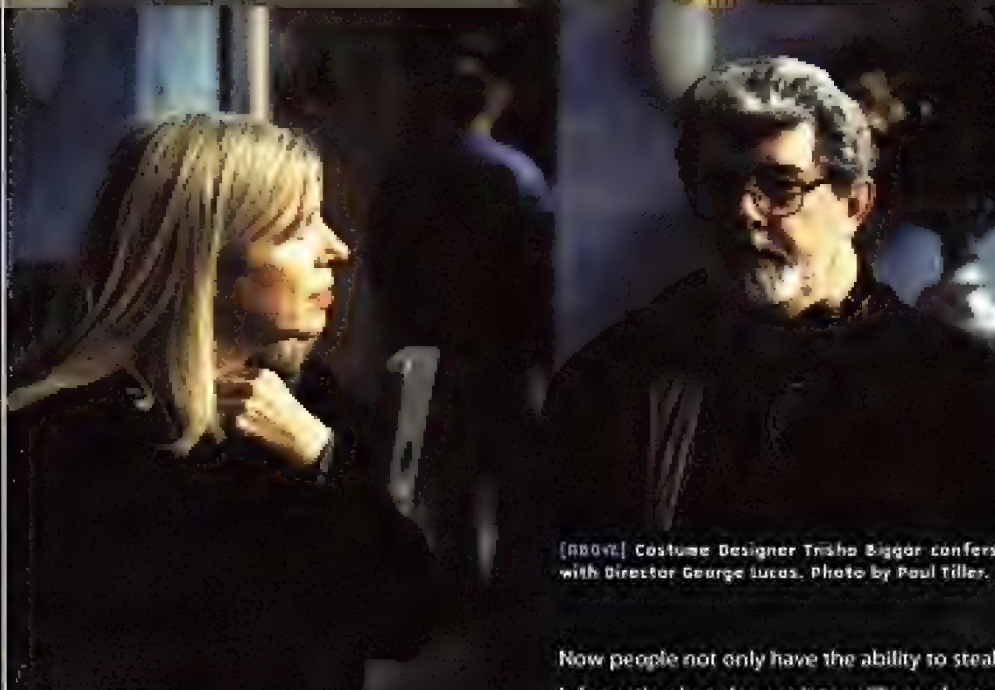
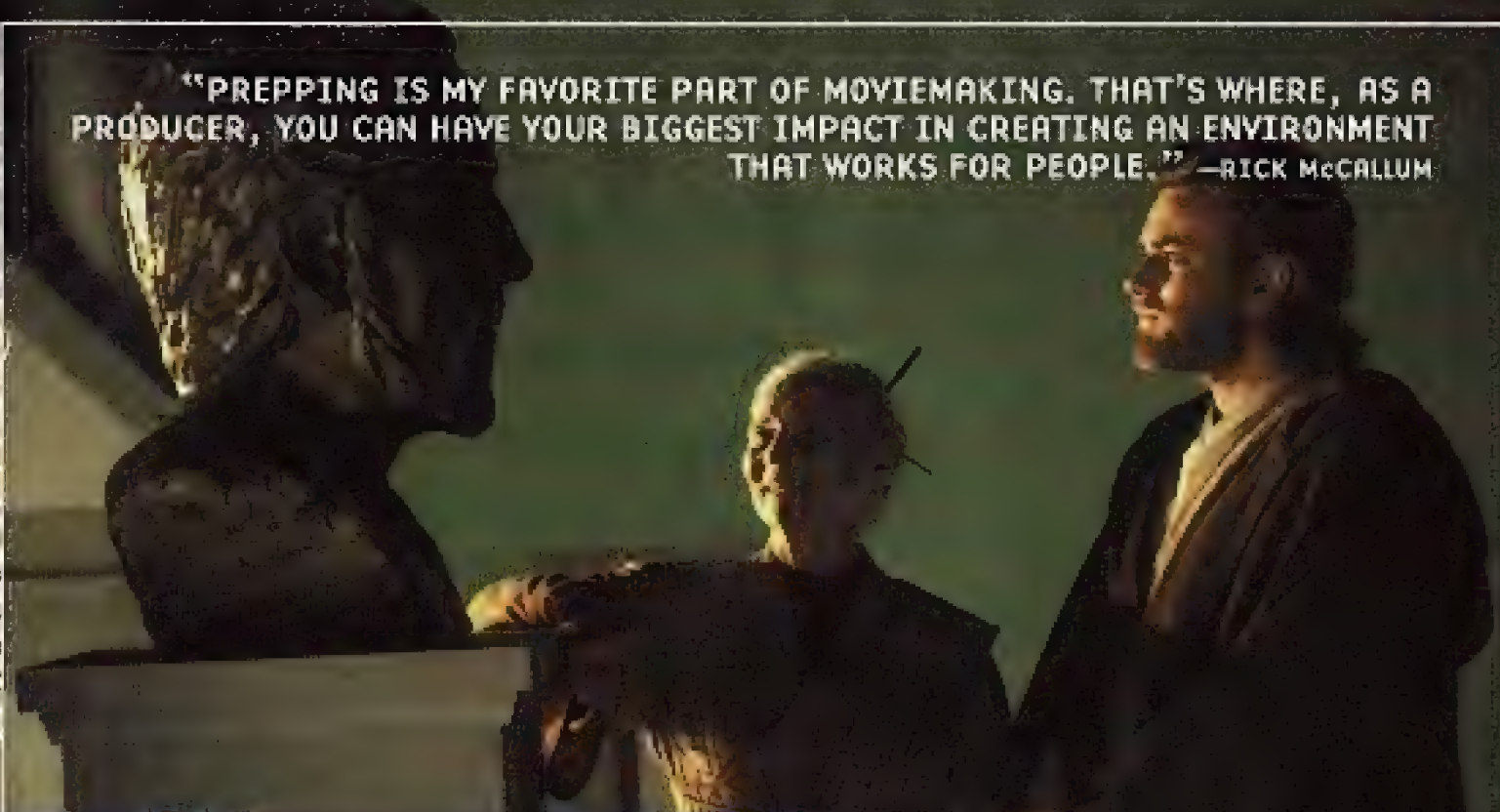


Photo by George Lucas



Photo by Sue Heller

"PREPPING IS MY FAVORITE PART OF MOVIE MAKING. THAT'S WHERE, AS A PRODUCER, YOU CAN HAVE YOUR BIGGEST IMPACT IN CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT THAT WORKS FOR PEOPLE." —RICK MCCALLUM



[ABOVE] Costume Designer Trisha Biggar confers with Director George Lucas. Photo by Paul Tiller.

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

HOW DO YOU THINK THE INTERNET HAS AFFECTED THE PRODUCTION OF EPISODE I AND EPISODE II?

I think the internet has had no effect whatsoever on the making of the film. The impact of the film, the way rumors spread and so on has been affected by the internet. The only thing that affects us to some degree is security because obviously we have to be that much more careful than we were before.

Now people not only have the ability to steal information but also get it to millions of people very quickly. That has instigated more ruthless measures in terms of security. That is only because the copyright laws are not defined enough to punish anyone who steals something from us. That will get itself worked out in the years ahead. It doesn't affect the making of the movie. We really enjoy the internet, though. We love the official web site and love doing things for it. It's a great way to be able to communicate to lots of people about what you are doing, create a buzz, and get people interested. On one hand, that's

[TOP] Madame Jocasta Nu (played by Alethea McGrath) pauses before the bust of Count Dooku and tells his story to Jedi Obi-Wan Kenobi (actor Ewan McGregor) in the Jedi Temple library Archives. Photo by Sue Adler.

what you would call a marketing tool. On the other hand, it's also a great way to keep people who really love *Star Wars* involved in it.

WHEN WILL JOHN WILLIAMS BEGIN SCORING THE FILM?

John will see a very rough cut of the film this summer so he can get his hands around it and think about themes and so on. We will then probably show it to him again around September or October. We then begin scoring in January.

GEORGE HAS SAID BEFORE THAT HIS FAVORITE PART OF FILMMAKING IS THE EDITING PROCESS. WHAT WOULD THAT BE FOR YOU?

For me, I love every aspect but I guess I would have to say that I love preparing and organizing everything to the moment we start shooting. I also love the day-to-day intrigue and drama that exists on every set

and that drama is, basically, "Are we going to complete the day's work on time?" I love that. I love trying to facilitate that and make it happen and then driving it and helping push people to that end. I suppose prepping is my favorite part of moviemaking. That's where, as a producer, you can have your biggest impact in creating an environment that works for people which allows them to

do the things they want to do and giving them the tools to do it with.

RICK, THANKS FOR SPENDING SO MUCH TIME TO TALK WITH US AND UPDATING US ON THE PROGRESS OF EPISODE II.

Oh, it's always my pleasure. Take care. 🙌



[ABOVE] Padmé Amidala (actress Natalie Portman) and Anakin Skywalker (actor Hayden Christensen) share a simple meal in the hold of a freighter. **[BOTTOM]** Padmé Amidala and Anakin Skywalker share a tender moment at a perilous time in *Star Wars: Episode II*. Both photos by Sue Adler.

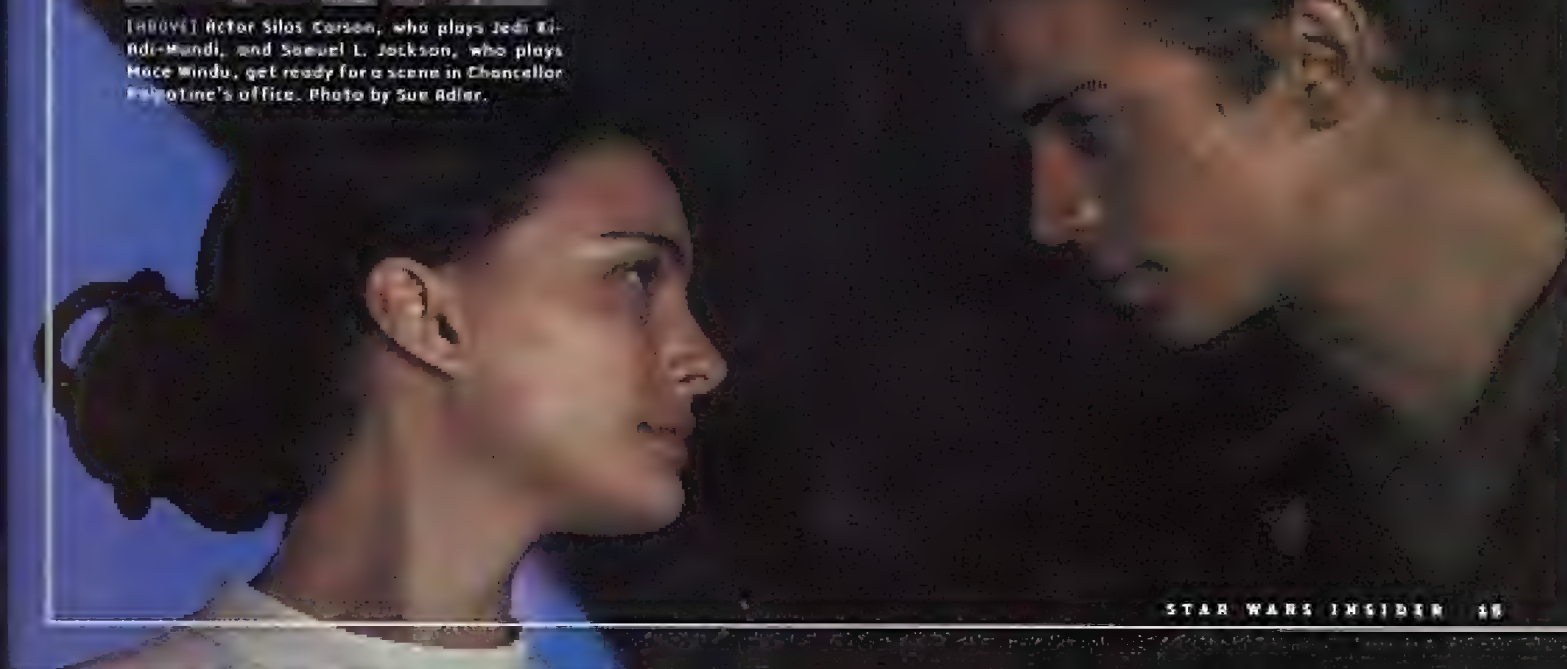


[ABOVE] Jedi Luminara Unduli (played by Mary O'Quinn) and her assistant Barris Offee (played by Nalini Krishan) join a meeting in the Chancellor's office. Photo by Sue Adler.

[BELOW] A massive pleasure dome takes shape on a *Star Wars* soundstage in Australia. Photo by Giles Westley.



[ABOVE] Actor Silas Carson, who plays Jedi Ki-Adi-Mundi, and Samuel L. Jackson, who plays Mace Windu, get ready for a scene in Chancellor Palpatine's office. Photo by Sue Adler.



STAR NEWS

» FROM THE WORLD OF LUCASFILM
by Sue Weinlein Cook

PHANTOM MENACE DVD COMES PACKED WITH EXTRAS!

**U.S. RELEASE SLATED FOR
OCTOBER 16, 2001**

The first *Star Wars* film ever available on DVD features more than six hours of bonus material, including a commentary by director George Lucas, Rick McCallum, and others. The *Star Wars*: Episode I *The Phantom Menace* DVD will take fans deeper into the *Star Wars* universe than ever before. Lucasfilm Ltd. and Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment announced in June that October 16, 2001, is the date to mark on your calendars for the disc's release in the U.S. and Canada.

In addition to the running commentary, the highly-anticipated DVD also includes such rarely and never-before seen extras as seven deleted scenes compiled just for this DVD, and an extraordinary documentary film culled from over 600 hours of behind-the-scenes footage. Also included is an interactive featurette with a glimpse into the process of animatics. Additional features include the original theatrical trailers, TV spots,

a still gallery, Web documentaries, featurettes, and much more. Fox and Lucasfilm promise a disc digitally mastered by THX for superior sound and picture quality, pushing the technological advancements of DVD to the limit.

Enthusiastic video purchasers throughout North America snapped up more than 5 million copies and generated nearly \$100 million at retail just 48 hours after the VHS debut of *The Phantom Menace* last year. The second highest-grossing motion picture of all time worldwide, Episode I also set records at the box office by achieving the biggest opening ever as it raced to become the fastest film in history to reach \$350 million in North America.

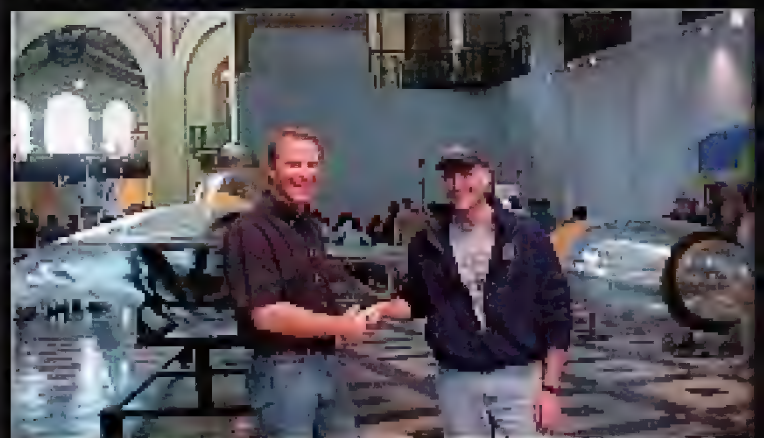
Lucasfilm and Fox also announced the release of George Lucas' and Ron Howard's *Willow* on DVD in North America late this year.

The Phantom Menace DVD, is a two-disc set with an approximate

running time of 480 minutes. Look for a more detailed preview in the next issue of the Insider. ☺



U.S. Air Force pilot Scott Zosky (right) shakes hands with ELM Model Supervisor John Goodwin. Behind them is the N-1 Naboo Starfighter, making its first appearance in the U.S.



LIVING THE DREAM

Star Wars inspires people of every generation to turn their flights of fancy into real-life adventure. Scott Zosky, a U.S. Air Force fighter pilot, attended the all of the *Starfighter* premier. The piloting scenes of *Star Wars* odes like Luke Skywalker and Ben Solo instilled in Scott a childhood dream of becoming a pilot, which is a dream Scott lives today.



Hayden: The Chosen 'One To Watch'

Not only is he "the chosen one"—according to *Movieline* magazine, actor Hayden Christensen is "One to Watch."

Christensen, who plays Anakin Skywalker in Episode II, received the "One to Watch" award at the third annual Young Hollywood Awards, sponsored by *Movieline* magazine. The actor turned 20 just ten days before the ceremony.

The ceremony, hosted by Carson Daly, was held April 29 at the House

of Blues on Hollywood's Sunset Strip. During the awards, audience members enjoyed a sneak peek at some behind-the-scenes footage of Episode II.

Recipients of the "One to Watch" award, a new category added this year, are selected by the *Movieline* editors. The award recognizes young actors who work consistently in feature films and are on their way to becoming Hollywood's next big stars. Other "Ones to Watch" this year were Gabrielle Union (*Bring It On*, *The Brothers*), Marisa Coughlan (*Teaching Mrs. Tingle*, *Gossip*, *Twisted*, *Got Fingers?*), and Usher Raymond (*Light It Up*, *The Faculty*). 🍌



John Williams Receives Honorary Doctorates

John Williams has earned five Academy Awards during his

career, as well as one British Academy Award, 18 Grammys, three Golden Globes, two Emmys and numerous gold and platinum records. This year, the composer of the scores for the *Star Wars* movies added to his collection of achievements Honorary Degrees from the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music and Utah State University.

Visiting the New York campus on April 29, he conducted the Eastman Philharmonia in a special concert of his film music for students and faculty. The *Star Wars* opening theme served as the encore. At the concert, the school awarded him an honorary doctorate of music degree as a tribute to the enduring power of his work.

"It's a tremendous honor to have John Williams visit Eastman, and an incredible opportunity for our students to perform his internationally recognized music under his direction," said the school's director, James Undercoffer. "His music has a remarkable diverse reach."

In a bit of a reversal just one week later, Williams sat in the audience at a concert in his honor at Utah State University in Logan.

➤ "WILLIAMS" CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM LAUNCHES STARFIGHTER EXHIBIT

Thousands of visitors—many in costume—previewed the "Star Wars: Art of the Starfighter" exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution's Arts and Industries Building in Washington, D.C., on April 28. The exhibit, which explores the genealogy of *Star Wars* starships, boasts as its centerpiece a full-scale, 35-foot-long Naboo Starfighter used in the making of *Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace*.

More than 11,000 visitors attended the preview and ribbon-cutting ceremony, said Anabeth Guthrie, media relations manager for the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES). "That's triple the average April Saturday visitors of the Air and Space Museum." More than 6,000 visitors came through the exhibit the second day, she added.

Special guests at the 3,000-square-foot exhibit's ribbon cutting included Industrial Light & Magic Model Project Supervisor John Goodson, who was a

concept model maker on Episode I. Also attending were Jane Boston, general manager of Lucas Learning; Mary Bihr, LucasArts Entertainment Company vice president of worldwide sales and marketing; and Kathleen Holliday, Lucasfilm's director of special programs.

Smithsonian Undersecretary Sheila Burke did the honors of cutting the ribbon to officially open the exhibit. Though she valiantly attempted to cut the ribbon with a toy lightsaber as a treat for the cameras, the more traditional scissors proved the way to go.

This is the first time the signature yellow and chrome spacecraft model has been presented in the United States. The ship was displayed previously at London's

➤ "STARFIGHTER" CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

STAR SIGHTINGS

55

» Where They Are, What They're Doing, and How You Can See It All!

Sue Weinlein Cook



Everyone who's seen his films knows that director Kevin Smith (*Dogma*, *Chasing Amy*) is one of Us. The man loves *Star Wars*—one of the most memorable moments in his film *Clerks* was a scene in which the two main characters pondered the morality of contract workers dying alongside Imperial bad guys in the Rebellion's fiery attack on the unfinished Death Star in *Return of the Jedi*. And *Silent Bob's* homage to Yoda in *Moloch* manages to keep that movie on our 16-rent lists. So no one should be surprised that Smith's next venture, due out in August, is titled *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back*.

What is surprising is the film's Skywalker quotient. **CARRIE FISHER** (Princess Leia) tells the British online entertainment magazine *Popcorn* that her cameo role as a nun is a "very serious" character involved in an off-color misunderstanding. Onscreen brother **MARK HAMILL** (Luke Skywalker) has signed on for a cameo.



With a nod to *The Empire Strikes Back*, Smith's plot revolves around Jay's (Jason Mewes) and *Silent Bob's* (Smith) attempt to sabotage the production of a film based on the comic book that chronicles their lives as revenge for being cut out of the royalty loop.

Fisher's UK fans caught her recent *InStyle* magazine article about her life as a mother and a daughter—of actress Debbie Reynolds, not the Dark Lord of the Sith.

Hamill made headlines of his own when Sci-Fi.Com announced that he will voice the Joker in the *Justice League of America* animated series for the Cartoon Network. Hamill previously voiced the clown-faced villain in 1998's *The Batman/Superman Movie* for television and in the acclaimed *Batman* animated series and *The New Batman/Superman Adventures* series. In *Justice League*, the Joker appears as a member of the Injustice Gang....

Meanwhile, **HARRISON FORD** (Han Solo) once again hits *Premiere* magazine's Power 100 list of Hollywood's major players. The celeb ranked 48 this year,



down 11 points from his previous rank as No. 37. The magazine acknowledged his success with last year's *What Lies Beneath* but tongue-lashed the actor for turning down the drug-czar part in the Academy Award-winning *Traffic* (a role Michael Douglas stepped into). In Ford's favor, *Premiere* cited his plan to don fedora and whip again in a fourth Indiana Jones feature, produced by **GEORGE LUCAS** (No. 18 on the Power 100 list). According to the magazine, Indy 4 director **STEVEN SPIELBERG** (No. 6) sought Oscar-winner M. Night Shyamalan (No. 65) to script the new Dr. Jones adventure.

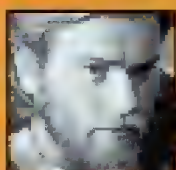
Ford ranked a little higher in the Seventh Annual Blockbuster Entertainment Awards, coming away with Best Actor honors in the Suspense Film category for *What Lies Beneath*. (Costar Michelle Pfeiffer was voted Best Actress in the same category.) And let's not forget, whatever his rank on *Premiere's* list, Ford remains a box-office powerhouse, pulling in a reported \$25 million for his role as captain of a Russian sub in the 2002 submarine thriller *K-11: The Widowmaker*. The film also features *The Phantom Menace's* **LIAM NEESON** (Qui-Gon Jinn)....

EWAN MCGREGOR (Obi-Wan Kenobi), seen recently in *Moulin Rouge*, has been cast with his *Transporting* companion Jenny Lee Miller in the comedy *On the Line*. Playing opposite the Jedi is Sarah Michelle Gellar (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*). On the line has McGregor's American-Italian character teaming up with Miller to search for Gellar—though it seems she's Miller's love interest. The pairing with Gellar could be repeated in the post-holocaust British film *Mondo Beyond* (co-starring Rufus Sewell of *Dark City*), scheduled to begin filming next year.

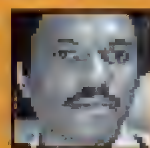


The Official *Star Wars* Web Site announced several new character names for Episode II, namely British legend **CHRISTOPHER LEE** (*Sleepy Hollow*) as Count Dooku, **VERONICA SEGURA** (*Subterfuge*) as handmaiden Cordé, Australian actress **ROSE BYRNE** (*Beneath the Banyan Trees*, *The Goddess of 1967*) as handmaiden Donné, and fellow Aussie **SUSIE PORTER** (*Mullet Better Than Sex*) as waitress Hermione Bagwa....

In other casting news, **WARWICK DAVIS** (*Wicket and Wield*) will play Professor Flitwick in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, according to *Premiere* magazine. The actor was scheduled for several appearances in Japan this summer, as was the Ewoks' much



taller Jedi buddy **PETER MAYHEW** (*Chewbacca*). Just back from Tokyo is **BILLY DEE WILLIAMS** (Lando Calrissian). The New York Daily News reports that the Cloud City administrator plans to return to Asia—this time to China—to shoot a new film.



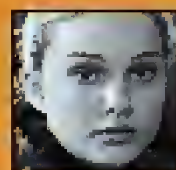
Closer to home, at Walt Disney World's annual *Star Wars Weekends* in May, were **KENNY BAKER** (R2-D2), **DOUG CHIANG** (Design Director), Fisher, Mayhew, **JEREMY BULLOCH** (Boba Fett), Davis, **MIKE QUINN** (Nien Nunb), and **PHIL BROWN**



(Uncle Owen). Fans at the Weekends (see *Insider* #54) were treated to Q&A sessions with the celebs, as well as photo opportunities with costumed characters, a Jedi Training Academy, and a late afternoon party featuring tunes from *Fight D'An* and the Medal Nodes.

And to help celebrate the 2001 *A Space Odyssey* theme for this year's Kentucky Derby Festival, **JAMES EARL JONES** (voice of Darth Vader) appeared as the special guest at the event's kickoff luncheon in April.

Two Episode I actors are bound for the stage in coming months. The New York Post reports that **LIAM NEESON** (Qui-Gon Jinn) is set to participate in a revival of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, a play set against the backdrop of the Salem witch trials. The Post theorizes that Neeson will play the role of the brave but doomed John Proctor for as little as \$2,000 a week, in addition to a percentage of ticket sales. The play debuts in January, five years after Neeson's last foray onto the Great White Way—in Oscar Wilde's *The Judas Kiss*, also directed by former chief of Britain's National Theater Richard Eyre.



Qui-Gon's young charge, **NATALIE PORTMAN** (Padmé Amidala) steps onto the boards in a revival of Chekhov's *The Seagull*. The performance runs July 24

through August 19 in New York City. This spring, her trusted captain, **HUGH QUARSHIE** (Captain Ponsok), took to the small screen with a bit part on the A&E network's *Horatio Hornblower* miniseries. Always the freedom fighter, Quarshie played the leader of rebellious French slaves who attempt to seize a Spanish fortress. ☺



Utah. He was one of several guests at the live concert, organized by the school's Department of Music, in pay tribute to the class of 2001. The Utah Chamber Singers, Chorus, and Wind Orchestra performed "Fashioned as a Galaxy," a piece composed by David Greetham. In addition, the school's Wind Ensemble gave Williams a special welcome by performing the title music from the movie *Star Wars*. Williams gave Williams a special welcome by performing the title music from the movie *Star Wars*. Williams gave Williams a special welcome by performing the title music from the movie *Star Wars*.

Williams gave Williams a special welcome by performing the title music from the movie *Star Wars*.

Williams received an honorary doctorate degree from Utah State the next day, May 5, as part of the university's 100th annual commencement activities.

Born in New York, Williams moved in 1948 to Los Angeles, where he eventually began his career in the film industry. He wrote music for many television programs in the 1960s. Since then, he has composed the music and



served as music director for more than 80 films, including the *Star Wars* trilogy, the Indiana Jones trilogy, *Superman*, *Jaws*, *Home Alone*, *Presumed Innocent*, *28*, and more recent films such as *Arctic Fire*, *Scary Movie 2*, *Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace*, and

The Reckless. Williams has been nominated for 19 Academy Awards, making him the most nominated living person. His soundtrack album *Star Wars* has sold more than 4 million copies, making it one of the most successful non-pop albums in recording history. 🌟

★ "STARFIGHTER" CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

Barbican Centre as part of last year's "The Art of Star Wars" exhibition.

Guthrie said the exhibit's preview, billed as a Fan and Family Day Costume Party, attracted *Star Wars* lovers from all over the country. "A whole group of stormtroopers with a Boba Fett, an Imperial Guard, and a Darth Maul drove down from New York," she said. "They were stopping traffic on Constitution Avenue. It was fantastic."

Families attended together, too. Kids had a ball with special activities created for the exhibit, particularly a large mural where they could draw starfighters of their own and a craft area where they could build droids from old-fashioned wooden clothespins, pipe cleaners, and gold or silver paint. "People were making C-3PO units left and right," Guthrie said. "There's still glitter all over the place."

In addition to the Naboo starfighter, the exhibit included audio-visuals, images, and interpretive text illustrating the use of models in the creation of movie special effects. Reproductions of concept art for other ships, such as the *Millennium Falcon* and X-wing fighter, displayed the evolution of starfighter design in the *Star Wars* saga. The exhibit also highlights the work of Lucasfilm

in the documentary video "Designing Star Wars" and through interactive learning activities from Lucas Learning and LucasArts. And the new Sony PlayStation 2 *Star Wars: Starfighter* and PC-based *Star Wars: Pit Droids* games provided a fun diversion for those willing to stand in line.

The exhibit ran in Washington D.C. through June 24. In July "Star Wars: Art of the Starfighter" began its four-year tour of Smithsonian Affiliate museums.

This is only the second *Star Wars* exhibit sponsored by the Smithsonian, Guthrie said. The successful "Star Wars: The Magic of Myth" exhibit debuted at the Air and Space Museum and went on to tour museums across the country. ("Star Wars: The Magic of Myth" runs from August 5 to January 5 at the Toledo [Ohio] Museum of Art and from April 5 through July 7, 2002 at the Brooklyn Museum of Art.) 🌟

Descriptions and itineraries for Smithsonian Institution exhibitions can be found at www.si.edu. Information on Smithsonian Affiliations can be found at <http://affiliations.si.edu>.

STAR WARS: ART OF THE STARFIGHTER PREMIERE

Star Wars fans flocked to Washington D.C. on April 28 for the premiere of the "Star Wars: Art of the Starfighter" exhibit, featuring a life-size model of the N-1 Naboo Starfighter used in the filming of Episode I.



▲ Stormtroopers and work-for-hire bounty hunters were called upon to impress the 12,000-strong crowd at the premiere.



▲ Smithsonian Undersecretary Shelia Burke demonstrated her skill with the lightsaber before the ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open the exhibit.



▲ Darth Maul and dozens of lightsaber-happy Jedi managed to stop traffic on Constitution Avenue.



▲ Star Wars Fan Club members in the Washington D.C. area received postcard invitations to the exhibit's stellar premiere.

COMLINK

» WELCOME TO "COMMUNITY LINK," OR "COMLINK" FOR SHORT.

SEE HOW YOUR FELLOW FANTASIES EXPERIENCE AND LIVE THE STAR WARS PHENOMENON!

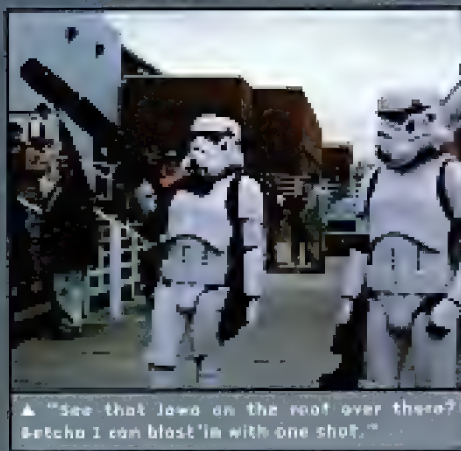
I-CON 2004

By Helen Keller

On the cold, somewhat rainy weekend of March 29th, fans packed the campus of the State University at Stony Brook in Stony Brook, NY for the 20th annual I-Con, the Northeast's largest convention of science fiction, science fact, and fantasy.

Cos just aren't cons without fans in costume. One high-profile group at I-Con was the Empire City Garrison (www.empirecitygarrison.com), a task force of female fans who attend cons as stormtroopers. Another noteworthy fan was Doug Hubbard, who attended as a young Indiana Jones.

Also on hand for I-Con was sci-fi cartoonist Tye Boundary of "The Lighter Side of Sci-Fi" (www.thelightersideofscifi.com). An artist whose work has appeared in *Starlog* and several other science-fiction magazines, Tye's humorous work is strongly



▲ "See that Jawa on the roof over there? Betcha I can blast 'im with one shot."

influenced by *Star Wars*. Where else can you see Darth Vader boarding the Tantive IV to ask whether they have any Grey Poupon? Tye told *Insider* that "The Lighter Side of Sci-Fi" wouldn't be true to science fiction if I didn't include *Star Wars*. "I don't think the little kid in me who makes up the cartoons would keep doing cartoons if he couldn't play with the *Star Wars* universe.... I find humor in everything. My dog sticks his head out of car windows, I envision Chewbacca doing the same in the Falcon. I like humor in my science fiction and don't think that there's enough in current sci-fi, so I try to add it in."

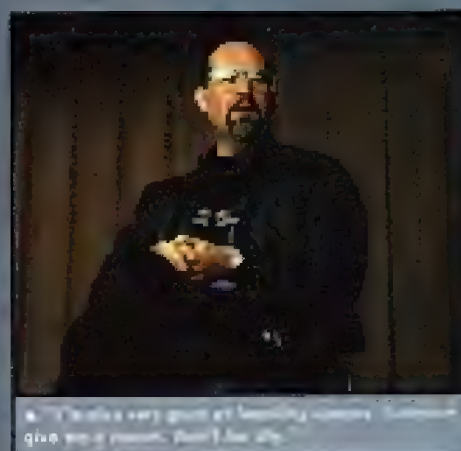
The celebrity *Star Wars* guests enjoyed themselves just as much as the fans. Timothy Zahn (the *Heir to the Throne* trilogy, the *Hand of Thrawn* duology), I-Con's Author Guest of Honor, Ann Lewis (*The Essential Guide to Alien Species*), Jean Cavakas (*The Science of Star Wars*), and John Peel (*Star Wars Journal: The Fight for Justice* by Luke Skywalker) held well-attended panels on working with media tie-ins and *Star Wars* archetypes.



▲ "You're like Charlie's Angels, except we kill Peter Dink. We're Palomine's Angels."

In his Guest of Honor speech, Tim (pictured at bottom) briefed fans on his current work and shared with them his memories of working in the *Star Wars* galaxy. For

Ann Lewis, a newcomer to the Expanded Universe, this was one of her first conventions as a *Star Wars* author. "The fans have been wonderful, and I had a great time being on panels with Tim. I discovered that he and I both went to Michigan State—which is wild. I recall K.M. Michael (Kube McDowell) and Daniel Wallace went there, too. It's now a *Star Wars* trend." Ann's comments sum up the I-Con experience. Yes, there are new movies to enjoy, but we have to wait for those. Cons can fill that gap. Even though we may think we know all there is to know about *Star Wars*, we don't. There's always something to make *Star Wars* fun.



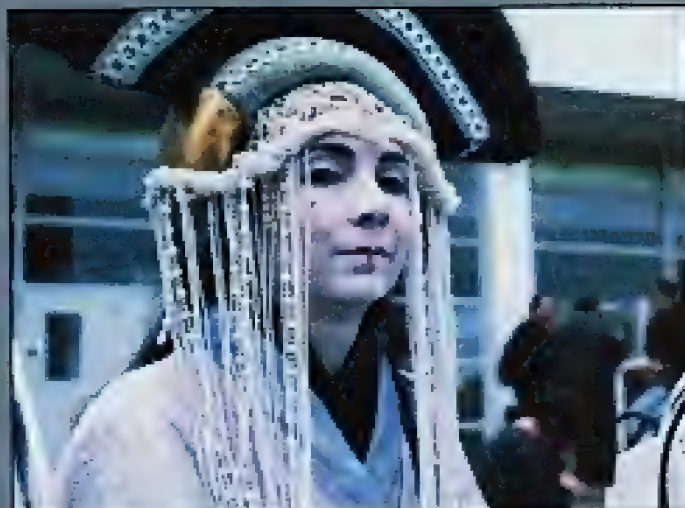
▲ "It's a very good art form, writing, because it gives you a reward that I can't give."

JEDI-CON 2004

By Lisa Stevens

Cologne, Germany stood by helplessly as 1,200 fans from around Europe and the U.S. flocked to the Santory Sale on April 13 for three days of *Star Wars* excitement sponsored by the Official *Star Wars* Fan Club in Germany.

The guest star list included Episode II producer Rick McCallum, actors Jeremy Bulloch, Warwick Davis, Jenna Blake, Peter Mayhew, and Michael Sheard; R2-D2 operator and ILM employee Don Bies, and *Star Wars* author and collector Steve Sansweet, Lucasfilm's head of fan relations. Guests ran a number of panels and were available for autographs. You could even get your picture taken with the entire ensemble for a small fee! The convention provided numerous opportunities to talk with your favorite guests.



▲ The galaxy of *Star Wars* fans met together at JEDI-CON.

The opening ceremony included an original fan-made film featuring Boba Fett and some other bounty hunters. The highlights included a scene in which Fett uses a jetpack to destroy some pursuing TIE fighters. Later in the film, Han crashes planet-side—right onto the head of an unsuspecting stormtrooper.

The crowning moment of the convention occurred Saturday evening when the Das Metropolis Filmorchester performed over two hours' worth of music from all four *Star Wars* films, with scenes from the films displayed on the huge screen behind the orchestra.

The convention also featured a question-and-answer session with McCallum, who took time out of his busy schedule at Ealing Studios in London to attend JediCon for a day. ☺

SAMUEL L. JACKSON

THE JEDI RETURNS

To paraphrase, or rather, borrow liberally, from the theme to *Shaft*, who's the Jedi Knight who's a death machine to all followers of the Sith?

Mace.

Who is the man that will risk his life for his brother man?

Mace. (Can you dig it?)

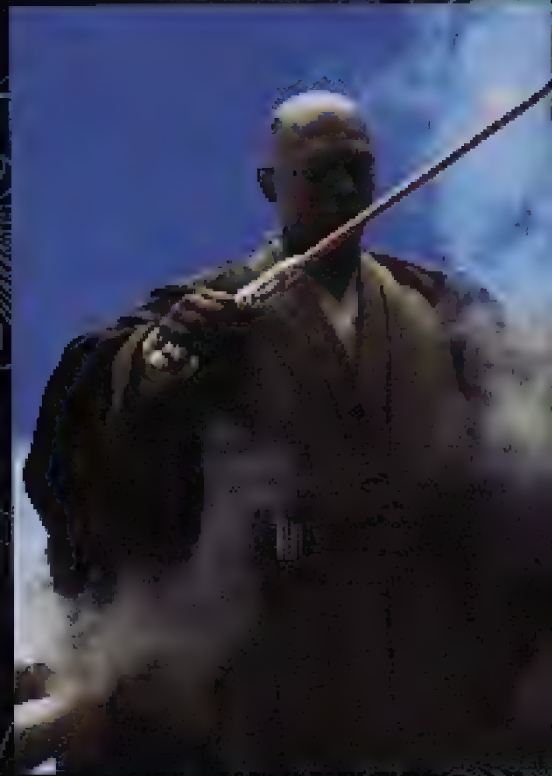
Who's the cat who won't cop out when there's danger all about?

I'm talking about Mace. Mace Windu.

It seems only fitting that Mace Windu, the strictly-business yet supercool Jedi Master whose time in *The Phantom Menace* was so tantalizingly short, should have his own heroic theme song. And what better music than the funk classic written by Isaac Hayes about John Shaft, the private eye played by Samuel L. Jackson in last year's hit remake?

For with *Shaft* as with *Star Wars*, Sam Jackson stepped with an ease that appeared effortless into a beloved movie series and made the character his own. In fact, Jackson made such an impression with his brief appearance as Mace in Episode I that his role was expanded significantly for Episode II, which finds Windu in the thick of the action. The prequel sequel promises to present Jackson in full lightsaber attack mode—something that fans and the actor himself have been anticipating since he first took his seat beside Yoda on the Jedi Council.

Written by Scott Chernoff
Reporting by Lynne Hale & Spencer Susser



THE SUPERSTAR ACTOR BEHIND SHAFT, PULP FICTION, AND SOME OF HOLLYWOOD'S BIGGEST
BIGGER, BETTER, AND

JACKSON



[TOP, LEFT] Mace Windu, a man of mystery in Episode I, has a more active role in the next film. [BOTTOM, LEFT] This Jedi is smokin'! Actor Samuel L. Jackson, aided by special effects technicians, adds some effects to his natural fighting talents. Photo by Giles Westley. [RIGHT] Jedi Master Mace Windu conducts important business in his office in the Jedi Temple on Coruscant. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti.

**THE BIGGEST BLOCKBUSTERS IS BACK IN EPISODE II AS JEDI MASTER MACE WINDU—
BADDER THAN BEFORE.**

SAMUEL L. JACKSON

THE JEDI RETURNS

Back then, Jackson was already a star, primarily known for his breakthrough roles in *Pulp Fiction*, *Die Hard with a Vengeance*, and *Jungle Fever*. But since *Star Wars*, Jackson has become even more of a household name, considered not just one of America's finest actors (thanks to *Fiction* and *Fever*, as well as *Fresh*, *The Red Violin*, *187*, *Jackie Brown*, and *Eve's Bayou*), but also one of Hollywood's most bankable stars, with not only *Shogun* under his belt but also such recent hits as *Unbreakable*, *Rules of Engagement*, and *The Negotiator*.

But as he did with *Star Wars*, Jackson also loves acting so much that he often takes roles in movies that intrigue him, no matter how small the part. That's how he ended up, for instance, in one scene of Oscar-winning director Stephen Soderbergh's nifty noir *Out of Sight*, or as shark meat in the hit action flick *Deep Blue Sea*. And while he's been in blockbusters like *Jurassic Park* and *The Phantom Menace*, Jackson still stars in independent features like this year's *The Covenanter* and *Valentine*, which he also produced.

Jackson, 52, began his acting career in Atlanta, where he graduated from Morehouse College in 1972 with a degree in Theatre Arts. He soon made the move to New York City, doing street theater, children's theater, repertory theater—just about any kind of theater he could do, even working as Bill Cosby's stand-in for a few seasons of *The Cosby Show*.

The parts and venues grew, and by the end of the '80s, Jackson slowly began getting small parts in big movies, like Eddie Murphy's *Coming to America*, Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing*, and Martin Scorsese's *Goodfellas*. His big break came in 1991 when his riveting performance in Lee's *Jungle Fever* garnered him widespread praise and a special supporting acting award created just for him at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival.

The seminal *Pulp Fiction* followed three years later, resulting in an Oscar nomination and an indelible place in moviegoers' memories as the fire-and-brimstone hit man who wants to walk the world like Caine from *Kung Fu*.

Since then, it's been a constant stream of

movies, resulting in the actor ending the 1990s as the decade's most prolific actor, having appeared in more films—36—than any other performer of the '90s, according to trade paper *Variety*. (He also ranks as the decade's top-grossing actor, with his 36 films combining to earn over \$1.7 billion.) The non-stop pace makes sense, considering that Jackson, in addition to being such an engaging actor, is also a true fan of the movies. He spent much of his youth in Chattanooga, Tennessee, watching swashbucklers, sci-fi, and other adventures. He retained that enthusiasm throughout his life—showing up, for instance, on the opening day of the original *Star Wars* in 1977.

The story of the clash between the rebels and the Empire so intrigued Jackson that he returned time and again to see *Star Wars* and its sequels, beginning a lifelong fascination with the saga he first discussed with the *Insider* in 1996, when he recalled, "I was totally blown

[BELOW] Qui-Gon Jinn and Obi-Wan Kenobi seek the wisdom of the Jedi Council. [RIGHT] Leonard Thomas (Samuel L. Jackson's assistant) goes sober to sober with his boss in a fight carefully choreographed by stunt coordinator Nick Gillard. Photo by Paul Tiller. [FACING, RIGHT] Giving just a small preview of what's to come, Samuel L. Jackson shows what he can do when he's not seated at the Jedi Council. Photo by Giles Westley. [FACING, BELOW] The relationship between Yoda and Mace Windu, both pivotal characters in *Star Wars: Episode II*, was first explored in *Episode I*.



"I ALWAYS WANTED TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THE CRIMSON PIRATE WITH BURT LANCASTER, SWINGING FROM SHIP TO SHIP AND KIND OF CUTTING PEOPLE'S HEADS OFF AND HAVING BIG SWORD FIGHTS, SWINGING FROM CHANDELIERS. AND NOW I FINALLY GET TO DO IT."

away. ... I've seen it eight or nine times since. In fact, I'm trying to find George Lucas now so I can be in his prequel" (*Star Wars Insider* #32).

Now, five years later, Samuel L. Jackson is living out his *Star Wars* dream. Not only did he land a plum role in Episode I, but he's back with a vengeance in Episode II. Indeed, when the *Insider* sat down with him on the *Star Wars* set in Sydney, Jackson had just finished rehearsing a lightsaber battle sequence—something he told us he'd always wanted to do—with stunt coordinator Nick Gillard, the same fight choreographer who had previously put Jackson through his paces on *Shaft*.

Once again, the two would create the fighting style for a life-risking cat who strikes with force when there's danger all about—Mace. Mace Windu.

You just finished a fight rehearsal with Nick Gillard. Was that fun?

Nick is the man. This is my second go-round with Nick—he also did *Shaft*. Now he's doing lightsaber battles for us all, and a lot of Kendo stuff. I guess that, because I'm such a fan of Japanese samurai movies and I've watched a lot of Kendo fights, I'm doing pretty well at it. It's basically a lot more footwork than I thought. For the sword stuff, getting the feet right and getting the steps so you can actually do it right—it's a lot like dance choreography. The feet have to be right so that the strikes look correct.

He's put together a pretty exciting and incredible fight for me. And since I'm supposedly the second baddest person in the uni-

verse, I'm pretty efficient. I don't do a lot of fancy sword twirling or anything. I dispense people pretty quickly, use as little energy as possible. But I'm pretty bad.

Did you have to train for this film?

When I was first on the set, about a month before, Nick showed me certain things to work on when I got home. I've been doing it very intensely for the past two days—so I'll be ready by next week when it's time.

At the MTV Movie Awards, George announced that he thought you were going to be up on that stage soon accepting for the best fight sequence.

Yeah he did, didn't he? Put a lot of pressure on me to do some major butt-kicking here. So hopefully that'll happen.

In the last movie, as you've said, you spent most of the time in the Jedi Council.

Yeah, just kinda' chillin'. Being kind of wise and all-knowing and just sitting around. But you know, I'm up on my feet and doing work now. It's going to be great. You're going to see another side of Mace Windu.

When you were shooting Episode I, you told George that you really wanted to fight in the next one. How does it feel to finally get your wish?

Well, I've watched all these swashbuckling films all my life. I was a huge Errol Flynn fan when I was a kid, and this seems to be the next step in the fencing age. I always wanted to do something like *The Crimson Pirate* with Burt Lancaster, swinging from ship to ship



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and kind of cutting people's heads off and having big sword fights, swinging on chandeliers. And now I finally get to do it.

It would be a shame for me to participate in a film like this and never get to use my lightsaber. So I'm amped. I want to get out there and do this. It's going to be fun.

What is the most fun part about being in a Star Wars movie?

It's the sense of adventure that these stories have. All those pirate movies were adventuresome, and I used to go to them and just let my mind go and get in the moment and play pirate when I was a kid. The fact that you're in something that is a really high adventure, that's fanciful, that's exciting, that's fast-paced, that allows an audience member to experience something that we wouldn't normally experience and be exhilarated by it, and actually be inspired to a point that you dream about this stuff—that's great!

Last night, I was dreaming about fighting with my lightsaber. So this stuff gets inside you, and it's exciting to be a part of something that you know is going to be enduring

the way the first three films were, that are part and parcel of the fabric of America, that people have embraced in a very real kind of way, that they have fond memories of when they were young, or how they felt the first time they saw it, and people have just gone to another place with. To be a part of it means that even if people forget a lot of the other films I've done, they won't forget this one.

When you first read the Episode II screenplay, were you excited at how your role was expanded and what you'd get to do?

Oh, totally. I think that the criticism that Episode I got was undeserved, but this is clearly back to the spirit of adventure of Episode IV—which is Episode I for most of us. But the spirit of adventure, the excitement, the drama—everything is in the script that made people fall in love with the original Star Wars.

I think this film is going to be awesome! There is so much going on. The characters are so well drawn. The story is interesting. It's something people want to know. There's romance for the kids who love romance sto-

ries. Young girls will be in love with Hayden Christensen, and the guys are going to be excited because Anakin's character is exciting, and Obi-Wan's character is exciting.

The adults who saw Star Wars the first time will get the Harrison Ford feeling from some of this film, because there's that kind of irreverence and thrilling stuff going on. The guys who like action movies, they're going to like this movie because there's some really good action in this movie. It's going to be great and appeal to a lot of people.

When you shot Episode I, you only had script pages for the scenes in which you appeared. This time, you got to read the entire screenplay. Did that change the way you approached the work?

No, not at all. The approach is the same: trying to figure out the goals of each particular scene that I'm in. What bits of information I have to disseminate to move the story along. The consistency of the character, in terms of his thrust and attitude. None of that changes. It's a bigger part, and I do more things in it that just means I have to work a little harder at being prepared every day, making sure I remember where I started and where I end—and making sure I stay alive for the next one! (Laughs)

Who is Mace Windu? How would you describe your character to someone who hadn't seen Episode I?

I usually describe Mace as a voice of reason. He thinks before he speaks. He's pretty calculating, mostly even-tempered. And he's not to be trifled with. He knows that the war is coming. I think he has a pretty good idea of who is behind it, but nobody is willing to just step up right now and say exactly who the bad guy is. Everyone is being very cautious. And they're starting to get pretty aggressive about what they need to do to participate in it, or to nip this thing in the bud.

He seems to be the second-most-powerful Jedi on that Council, next to Yoda. They spend a lot of time talking with each other, interestingly enough. In this episode, you actually see them having conversations—and not in for-

Samuel L. Jackson and writer/director George Lucas discuss a bit of action on a soundstage at Fox Studios Australia. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti.





[ABOVE, LEFT] Actor Christopher Lee (Count Dooku) chats with actor Samuel L. Jackson (Mace Windu) during the filming of Episode II. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti. [ABOVE, RIGHT] Samuel L. Jackson gets ready to assume the persona of Jedi Master Mace Windu as he listens intently to Director George Lucas just before shooting begins on an important scene in *Star Wars: Episode II*. Photo by Giles Westley.

mal meetings all the time where we speak Jedi-speak, that whole thing where you have very conversational-type discourses.

If Mace Windu was going to tell the story of *Star Wars*, what would he say is the major theme?

I guess he would talk about loyalty. He would talk about the spirit of mankind, and how people try to band together to make the world a better place, to create some sort of unity, some sort of balance with everyone, that not one person controls everything—trying to create harmony among the people.

And how do the Jedi fit into that story?

We're basically protectors of the universe. We oversee and watch over things. We're not soldiers. When things get out of hand, we will go into action, but we're not there to be bodyguards, although sometimes we do that. But we're not particularly the armed forces of the universe. We're people who try and make sure that harmony is maintained, that some sense of protocol is observed by different factors in the universe.

What are the main qualities of a Jedi?

You have to be kind of forthright. You have to have some sense of intuitiveness—a person who's pretty much not prone to do wrong, or to even have a proclivity to go in the wrong direction. Hopefully you find those people young enough that they haven't had an opportunity to let the bad things in their lives affect them in an adverse way so that they can remember them and go to the dark side. Apparently, we make mistakes.

By showing your head, you've avoided the whole Jedi hair issue. Can you explain Obi-Wan's and Anakin's hair?

I can't explain their hair, man—I mean, you know, that's personal choice. The only Jedi dress code we have is the robe. Everybody wears slightly different things under it, or slightly different versions of it. There are no Jedi hair codes, apparently. In the last one, there was a Jedi who looked like a Lhasa apso. I don't know if you noticed him, but there was a guy who was just totally like a sheepdog. We used to refer to him as the Lhasa, because when we had lunch, they used to curl his hair out of his way so he could eat. Then there was another guy who looked kind of like a Calamari. You know? So there's no standard hairstyle. It's all about what's inside you. Don't judge the book by its cover.

What is Mace Windu's relationship with Obi-Wan and Anakin?

With Obi, he's known him for a very long time. He knew Qui-Gon; they were contemporaries. He understood Qui-Gon's faults and admired his qualities, and he sees that Obi-Wan has taken on some of his strong-headedness—number one, by wanting to train Anakin. But Anakin is starting to display some interesting characteristics that need to be watched more closely. Obi-Wan intuitively has sensed that and understands our trepidation at wanting Anakin trained. He's sensing that now. But once he's in the program, per se, I think that we watch him more closely and hope that he'll outgrow those things or intuit that he shouldn't do certain things a certain way.

How about Mace Windu's relationship with Yoda?

I guess they have been in service with each other for a very long time. He's also a student. Yoda is definitely Master, even though Mace is referred to as Master himself. Everyone has a secondary position to Yoda, in some way. We're all under him. We aren't as intuitive, we aren't as strong mentally, and we aren't as strong spiritually. Yoda is incorruptible. He's kind of unfathomable in a lot of ways.

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But spiritually, Mace and Yoda are kind of in tune. That's why they can talk to each other, and a lot of times almost finish each other's sentences in an interesting kind of way. But Yoda is definitely the stronger and smarter and more spiritual of the two.

What did George originally tell you about your character?

Actually, nothing. Honestly, he never actually told me any of the qualities that Mace had. He never said, "He's from here, he's from there, he's this, he's that." He's allowed me to totally create this character and fill him out in any way that I've seen fit. I guess he trusts what I bring to this character. If I'm doing something wrong, I'm sure he would tell me. But generally he has allowed me to totally create this guy.

It's always wonderful to know that someone has that level of faith in you. That allows me freedom to create. But also, like most kids who want to please their teacher or their parents, you want to do the best that you can. I asked for this job, like I said. I think it's incumbent upon me to come to this job with all the professionalism and preparedness that I can bring. I work as hard at this as I do on any film. I think this deserves all my attention. The audience deserves the best that they can get from us in doing these jobs,

and I want to be taken seriously. It's as important as any job that I've ever had.

You were already a major star when you took a part in Episode I that was basically an extended cameo. Why did you originally take the role of Mace Windu?

That was the role George gave me. I pretty much campaigned to be in this movie. I knew he was shooting it, and folks ask you a lot who are some of the directors that you haven't worked with that you want to work with. I generally don't think about things like that, but I knew he was doing this film and I was doing this interview show in London, so I said, "George Lucas. He's doing some Star Wars movie and I'd really like to be in it." Apparently, somebody told him.

Robin Gurfand, the casting director, heard about the show and told George. Robin is totally responsible for all my Jedi success and for me being here.

I was pretty much willing to be a stormtrooper, just as long as I knew I was in the movie. I didn't care if anybody else knew. I just wanted to do it. And I was fortunate enough that George actually created this particular character for me to do. I didn't find that out until I got to London. Once they started

fitting Jedi robes on me, I was like, "Hey who is this guy? This is gonna be cool." So there was no way I was not going to do it.

Has your Star Wars experience lived up to your expectations so far?

It's cool. It's been all of that. I've had a fabulous time from the first day I stepped on the set in London three years ago, up until today, when I had my battle rehearsal. It's been a marvelous experience, full of marvelous people who have made my stay enjoyable, and hopefully I've brought some joy to them. It's a mutual admiration society around here.

Moving to Australia, we had the same spirit that the crew had in London—they worked very hard and were very excited to be there. By now, people can actually see and feel the excitement that's generated by doing these particular films. The spirit and the joy that most of us bring to this job when we do it will hopefully transfer palpably to an audience when they come to see it. I hope they'll have as much fun watching it as I've had doing it.

What are your thoughts on George's decision to shoot this movie entirely on high definition video?

It's a high-tech film, and George [always] known as an innovator. Here we go again. He's doing something new and different, and we're doing it in a different format. We're actually stepping into the next generation of filmmaking—moviemaking, actually, because we're not using film. It's really interesting, and it's going to be great to look at—just watching it on the monitors is an exciting thing, the clarity of it. The speed with which we're working is incredible.

I think people will always use film, but I also think there's going to be a generation of people that never even touch film, that are going to be using this format. Pretty soon, I guess there will be another generation of people that never even see video—they'll be using hard drives. It's the natural progression, and I think it's great that I'm part of it.

How much acting for this movie have you done where you're surrounded by bluescreens, with

A beaming Samuel L. Jackson finds something amusing on the set of Chancellor Palpatine's office during the making of Episode II. Photo by Sue Adler.



backgrounds and digital effects to be added in later?

How much? Gee, I can't think of one scene in this movie that doesn't have bluescreen. So I'd say 100 percent of all the scenes in this movie have bluescreen, as far as I can tell. I haven't done a scene that has no bluescreen. It's everywhere.

Some actors don't like to work with bluescreen backgrounds, but you've said that for you, it's fun. Why?

Well, that all depends on who you are. I've worked with bluescreen quite a bit because I've been in effects movies. I have a very active imagination, so it doesn't bother me that there aren't things there. If you give me a basic description of what's going on, I can fill in the blanks. I don't mind doing it.

Acting is all about being able to suspend disbelief. And if you don't have an active imagination, I guess you would have problems with it. I read a lot, and I try and activate my mind while reading so I can see the things that I'm reading about. I did improvisational theater for a long time. And that's where people just give you an idea and you run with it. Working with bluescreen is the same way. You need pretty accurate descriptions, so that when you do activate your imagination, it works.

So you've always got a pretty good idea of what's going to be going on around you?

I've looked at a lot of different things, including storyboards, and they have some pretty complete descriptions in the script. George is pretty true to that. But there's some things that you just can't imagine. So as fanciful and as far out as you can go sometimes, it works perfectly for this film because you have no idea what some of these things will look like. So you just kind of get out there and act like everything is normal.

One of Episode II's new castmembers wasn't so new to you. After all, you've worked before with Jimmy Smits, right?

Who? [Laughs]

What's it been like reuniting with him?

It's always a joy to run into Jimmy and be around him. Jimmy and I did theater together years ago, before anybody knew who either of us was. It's great to work with people that you know are confident, and it's even better to work with people that are good people, who are your friends, who are deserving, who are capable, and who bring a good vibe to the set. I happen to love my job, and I like coming to it. It's a lot better to come to a job where you know you're going to see people that you enjoy being around—especially on a 12- or 16-hour day.

Having somebody like Jimmy around can only make this job better, because he knows how to make the job fun for everybody around him. He comes prepared. And you can't ask for any more than that.

George Lucas has this reputation for being quiet and reserved. Has that been your experience with him?

Geez! You know, I think George is one of the most animated and interesting people that I've met. I've had some great conversations with him. I've had dinner with him a few times and been around him enough, and I've had laughs with him. He's funny, he's insightful, and he has a lot of information about the technical aspect of what's going on. I've seen him overjoyed at a technical accomplishment. He was talking about the water in *The Perfect Storm*, and he was so overjoyed that they finally got water right in CGI—it was like watching a kid discover the fact that he could actually count on his shoes.

You think of George as having all this technical acumen because of all the things he's done and all the things they've accomplished at ILM. But I remember going to his house to watch the *Star Wars* trailer the first time. We were in a screening room, but he actually couldn't get his screening room to work. His son Jett had to come over and say, "No, Dad, you do it like this," and Jett manipulated some stuff and all of a sudden it was working. So you kind of go, "Oh, well, he's just like me. When I have computer problems, I have to call my daughter. He had to

call in Jett to get his screening room to work. [Laughs!] This is George Lucas—he can't work a screening room. This is so cool!"



WITH A VENGEANCE: THE ESSENTIAL SAMUEL L. JACKSON

Here are the movies any Sam Jackson fan should not miss.

- 1981** *Ragtime*
- 1987** *Eddie Murphy Raw*
- 1988** *Coming to America*
School Daze
- 1989** *Do the Right Thing*
Sea of Love
- 1990** *Goodfellas*
Mo' Better Blues
- 1991** *Jungle Fever*
- 1992** *Patriot Games*
Juice
- 1993** *Jurassic Park*
True Romance
Menace II Society
- 1994** *Fresh*
Pulp Fiction
The New Age
- 1995** *Losing Isaiah*
Die Hard: With a Vengeance
- 1996** *A Time to Kill*
The Long Kiss Goodnight
- 1997** *T87*
Eve's Bayou
Jackie Brown
- 1998** *Sphere*
Out of Sight
The Negotiator
The Red Violin
- 1999** *Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace*
- 2000** *Rules of Engagement*
Shaft
Unbreakable
- 2001** *The Caveman's Valentine*
51st State
Changing Lanes
- 2002** *Star Wars: Episode II*

In some ways, it's just not fair. I mean, how many of us have spent years dreaming of being a part of the Star Wars universe? How many hours have you passed imagining yourself playing a part in a new Star Wars movie—even just a minor character, under a big mask, who walks across screen for, like, a second?



So how is it that Silas Carson popped out of the blue to play not one but two major roles in Episodes I and II of the new Star Wars trilogy? What is it about this one guy that, thanks to a couple other characters he brought to life in *The Phantom Menace*, made him the perfect actor to play a grand total of four different Star Wars characters?

Well, the answer is simple: Silas Carson is a damn good actor.

Sure, his multiple Star Wars personas are aided by the prosthetics and animatronic masks that make each one look different from the other. But there's more to it than that. Although his face is obscured, making his job all the more difficult, Carson still brings a convincing and thoughtful subtlety to each character that sets them all apart. There's the wise old Jedi Ki-Adi-Mundi, he of the slow movements and knowing eyes. There's the cowering coward Nute Gunray, whose body seems to recoil in fear when he's confronted. There was even, in Episode I, Lott Dod, Nute's fellow Neimoidian whose higher station produced a more confident stance that helped audiences differentiate between the two.



The villainous Nute Gunray (ABOVE) and Jedi Knight Ki-Adi-Mundi (RIGHT) are two of the four characters played by actor Silas Carson in *Star Wars* Episode I.

Of course, Carson can act without all the make-up, too. In Episode I, he was the pilot of the Republic Cruiser blown up by Nute-Gunray himself. More recently, Carson has been gaining fame in his native England thanks to roles on two recent television series. First came the short-lived *Metro Sexuality*, about a group of friends in West London. And now, Carson is starring in the hit medical drama *A & E*, which is sort of a British version of *ER* (*A & E* stands for Accidents and Emergency). The show, in which Carson plays an attractive young anesthetist, has taken off in the UK and will soon begin its second season there.

The 36-year-old actor didn't just pop into acting out of the blue, either. He paid his dues in drama school and began his career on the British stage. After the success of Episode I, he returned to London theatre, as well as appearing in the UK film *Josephine* and launching a career as a voice-over performer for cartoons and nature documentaries (his favorite kind of TV programming, he says). The voice-over

SILAS CARSON: Hero

A Phantom Menace Fan Returns To Reprise Jedi Hero Ki-Adi-Mundi, and



"You're just one of those cogs in a very mighty machine, and it doesn't always make sense at the time. You have to trust George."

—Silas Carson

résumé was significantly enhanced when Carson provided the voices for his own characters in *The Phantom Menace*, even the oddly intoned Neimoidians.

Carson's acting talents made such an impression on George Lucas, Rick McCallum, and casting director Robin Gurland that he was not only drafted for quadruple-duty in Episode I but he was invited back for Episode II—with an expanded role for Ki-Adi-Mundi, the Jedi Knight who became a fan favorite and comic book star. This time, Mundi, who spent his much of his screentime in *Menace* sitting still in the Jedi Council, stretches his legs—and his lightsaber—as he ventures out on a new mission.

As if that weren't enough, Nute Gunray is back, too, allowing Carson to put his stamp on two characters who couldn't be more different. Nute, the Trade Federation Viceroy who did Darth Sidious' bidding, is consumed by fear, despite his failed attempts to project a strong image. Ki-Adi, on the other hand, is so strong that he knows he doesn't need to draw

any attention to himself. (Then again, his Conehead-like cranium isn't exactly what you'd call low-profile.)

Carson achieves such distinction in his *Star Wars* characters through a lot of hard work, especially given that each role requires full attention and preparation—and demands days of work. Additionally, the actor must endure hours of uncomfortable make-up applications and spend his days in physically punishing costumes that are both heavy and hot. Indeed, he got the part of Nute Gunray in Episode I after he was already playing Mundi and another actor couldn't take the claustrophobia of the Neimoidian costumes.

So just how did this actor get two key parts in Episode II? He studied and worked at his craft, and when he got his big break in Episode I, he went above and beyond the call of duty, spending days in difficult conditions while eagerly taking on additional work. In other words, he earned it. Who said life isn't fair?



with a Thousand Faces

His Two Important Characters in Episode II —
Neimoidian Villain Nute Gunray. *by Scott Chernoff*

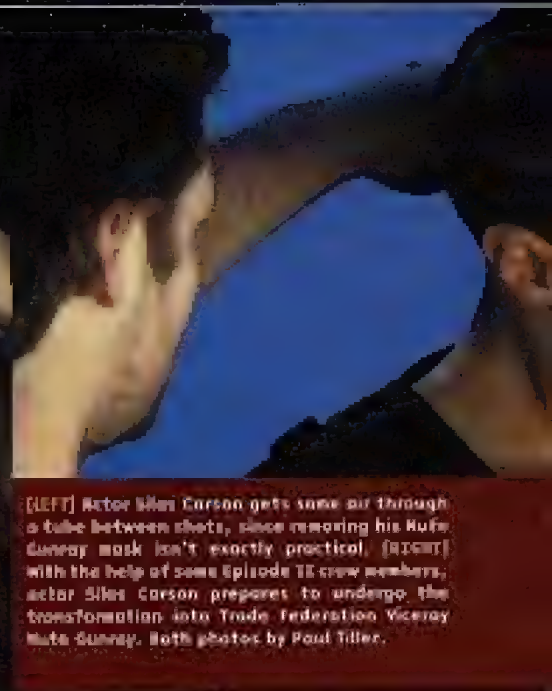
In Episode II, Ki-Adi gets up out of his chair and gets in on the action. Was it a challenge learning to fight Star Wars-style?

Well, there was certainly more moving around, and quite a lot of fighting to do. It was hard work doing the same sequences over and over again, and it's very physical. I was surrounded by a lot of guys who specialize in stunt work, so they were very fit, and I'm pleased to say I was outrunning quite a few of them. I managed to get myself very fit for this one. But it's hot work in those costumes, which are very thick wool, and even though the latex allows the skin to breathe, underneath all of that I've got a plastic skull cap and I'm pouring with sweat.

But the great thing about it is that, often your opponents are not actually there. They get painted in later. So for us it was a question of making lots of different kinds of moves, making it look good, and then the CGI guys will paint in the appropriate flying bullets and the appropriate characters afterward. So there's a great deal of freedom to it.

It must have been cool to fight with a lightsaber!

It's the question I get asked all of the time. That is people's greatest interest—do you get to use a lightsaber? I worked with [stunt coordinator] Nick [Gillard] for a couple of days. He's very good. He's very specific, and it's great fun. Doing any kind of fight sequence is enormous fun—I've done swordfighting onstage before, and that's just tremendous. But with this, you



[LEFT] Actor Silas Carson gets some air through a tube between shots, since removing his Mute Sunney mask isn't exactly practical. **[RIGHT]** With the help of some Episode II crew members, actor Silas Carson prepares to undergo the transformation into Trade Federation Viceroy Nute Sunney. Both photos by Paul Tiller.

know it touches people's hearts. You know this is the thing everybody else wants to do—and there's something very naughty about that.

Up until now, we've known Ki-Adi-Mundi as a stoic, kindly old man in a chair on the Jedi Council. As an actor, how do you bring the character of Ki-Adi-Mundi into the fight, and make him believable as a warrior?

It's a very difficult thing to do. I just told myself that he's a Jedi Knight, so he's going to be able to do anything physically that any young person could do. I had to remind myself of that, because obviously sitting in the chair, he looks like an old man, whereas when he gets up and he's wielding his lightsaber, he's going to be as quick as anybody else, because he's a Jedi.

But one of the difficult things to do was to stop and say lines right in the middle of a fight sequence. I had to remember where to place the voice—to speak a little slower than I normally do—because that's all the stuff I'd done when I was sitting in the chair. And I had to try to catch my breath. That was the hardest thing, because you don't want to sound like a 36-year-old guy who's out of breath. You want to sound like an old man who's completely in control of his whole system and has 17 different lungs. That was the most difficult thing about it.

It is actually a difficult thing to bring a character into a fight sequence like that when the character's so different from you, because obviously you're moving very quickly and it looks like you, but you've got to try to disguise that. I hope it works!

In our last interview with you (*Star Wars Insider* #44), you talked about filming scenes as Ki-Adi in the morning and Mute later the same afternoon. Did you have days on Episode II where you had to play both roles?

No, not this time. I was lucky enough to only be doing one at any given time.

In Episode I, you played Lott Dod and the Republic Cruiser Pilot, in addition to Mute and Ki-Adi. Are you playing any other characters



Actor Silas Carson also played the pilot of the Republic Cruiser which was destroyed by Mute Sunney (also played by Silas Carson) in *Star Wars* Episode I: The Phantom Menace.



in Episode II, or have you been reduced to just two?

[Laughs.] No, I'm just playing those two. I should feel hard done by it, but somehow I don't.

When you finished *The Phantom Menace*, did you know you would be returning for Episode II?

No, I had no idea. George keeps his cards very close to his chest. He's got the main thrust of the story, but he devises the scenes as they go, and I think that a lot of it depends on what works in the previous film, and also whom he likes to work with. There are lots of different factors that go into making the next story, so I think very few of us know if we're going through to the next film. I certainly didn't know from Episode I to Episode II, so it was a pleasant surprise at the beginning of 2000 when I got the phone call saying that both characters I played in the last episode were going through to this one. It was a great pleasure to hook up with everybody again.

Were you concerned they might go a different direction with Nute Gunray and digitally animate him this time?

You never know, and I don't think George knows until the last minute, because technology is being updated so rapidly.

But it's nice for me, because it's quite strange being so heavily disguised, and when I watch the movies, it's difficult for me to recognize myself in it. I mean, I recognize my movements and I recognize my voice, but it seems to me when I'm watching *The Phantom Menace* as though they're two people whom I know very well but aren't me.

When you're watching your own face on the screen, you don't have that same feeling of detachment—you can never help but look at yourself. But I look at Nute and Ki-Adi, and they look like two very good friends of mine. So it's nice being back on the movie, because it's a pleasure to work with Nute and Ki-Adi again.

So when you do look at those two characters, how do you respond to them?

I'm very fond of them both for different reasons. With Ki-Adi, I enjoy playing this very wise man who is part of the great council. You get the feeling that he is kind of like your uncle,

because he's this nice, kind, wise, protective master. I always think that way of him.

Nute is a completely different character altogether, but he makes me laugh because he's such a coward. He's one of those guys that's always cowering in the background and making a lot of noise, acting up as though he is very big and strong and brave. But he is quite the opposite, and I adore him for that, because there is something dreadfully vulnerable about him.

In Episode I, Ki-Adi-Mundi seemed to be one of the characters who really stood out on the Jedi Council. Why do you think he's such a star?

I think his looks account for a great deal of that. When I first saw the design, I just thought it was amazing, because it incorporates so many different things. To me, he looks part Native American and part European, and he's got a wonderful, wise face. Once I'd seen that design, I had a pretty good idea of what he should be like. So to me, that's the appeal of Ki-Adi—he is this wise, just, and kind person, and I think that sets him aside from some of the other designs of the Jedi that look more like strange monsters. There's something in him. There's something in his eyes, his whole demeanor, and I hooked the character on that.

Did George talk to you about Ki-Adi-Mundi and what his history is?

He pretty much left it to me to build it, to figure it out for myself. I think he was very pleased. I didn't know if he was going to record over my voice, which he normally does, but I found the voice for him, a slower, older man's voice, which had a lot of gravitas to it, and he really liked that and kept it. So I think he just trusted what I was doing with the character myself.

Have you read any of the Star Wars comics that have featured Ki-Adi-Mundi?

Yes, I have—they've been sending me loads of them, and they're just great. He really starred in that for a while, didn't he? I just love them. They're brilliant, Dark Horse Comics. But he's quite a different character there, isn't he?



Jedi Ki-Adi-Mundi (actor Silas Carson) and Palpatine aide Mas Amedda (actor David Bowers) wait in the Chancellor's office. Photo by Sue Adler.

When you shot your first *Star Wars* movie, it was your first large-scale production. Now, you're one of the veterans. How did it feel returning to the set for Episode II?

It was like catching up with old mates. That was the lovely thing about it. It's kind of like coming back to school—you've had a break for a while, and you come back and catch up with people. The difference this time is we were filming in Australia, which was fantastic. Last time we were in London—I don't know how that was for the Americans, but for us Brits, Leavesden is not the most attractive place in the world, and it was just on our back door step. Going to Sydney was far more glamorous, and of course we were there during the build-up to the Olympics. It's a very exciting place. I love Australia.

I hadn't been there before. I have a lot of friends and family there, and strangely enough I've tried to get there a couple of times. In fact, I'd even bought tickets twice before but had to cancel them because work had come up at the last minute. So to go there and do the work, rather than have the work pull me back away, was great. I just fell in love with it. It's a beautiful place.

It was also great because, last time, those of us who were Brits were working at home, but this time the whole bunch of us were away from home, and quite far away. It was like having a paid holiday. Hanging out at the hotel, shooting pool down at the local bars—great fun. That makes a big difference, because it is a lot more fun going back to a hotel where you're surrounded by members of the cast and crew than it is just going back home, because everybody's up for a good time.

What else was different this time around?

I think that last time there was an enormous amount of pressure to please. People had waited so long for the movie, and that's quite an albatross to have around your neck when you're working. This time around, it wasn't. I mean, we've shown *The Phantom Menace*, and there are other really big projects coming out that people are looking forward to, like *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*, so it felt more

relaxed this time. Not that it was tense the last time, but I feel as though this time we don't have to prove anything.

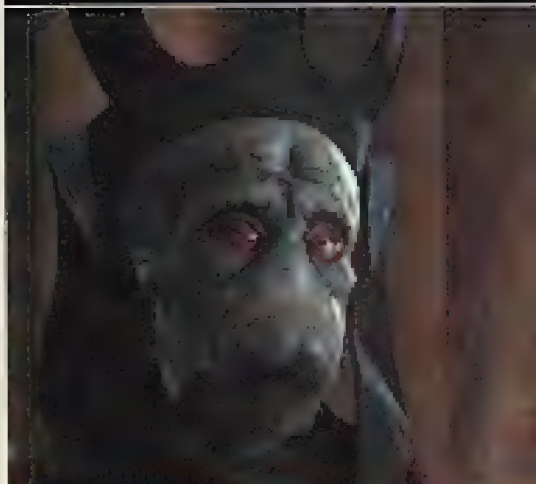
Last time, you got the sense that people were out there waiting with pens poised and baited breath—which I think was part of the problem in the way the film was received. People's expectations were so high that it was going to be virtually impossible for anybody to meet them. This time around, we don't have that kind of pressure, and it created a different atmosphere on the set. Plus, given that we'd all been working with each other before, it was very relaxed and laid-back, and thoroughly enjoyable. I think last time, even though people may not have carried that weight around with them or spoken about it, the weight of expectations was there. This time, I don't feel that it is.

You spent a significant amount of time in the make-up chair for Episode I. Had you forgotten just how tough that was when you returned for Episode II?

Yes—it was just as difficult this time around, and I'd forgotten how difficult it was. Actually, Nute is a fairly quick application—it's just a question of putting the head on, wiring him up, and putting the costume over it. We got it down to a pretty slick 10 to 15 minutes. But it's extremely uncomfortable being inside of it. Still, I was a little better at doing Nute this time simply because I was aware of the pitfalls.



Carson reprises the role of Jedi Master Ki-Adi-Mundi from Episode I, only this time fans will get to see him doing a lot more than just sitting around with his friends.



[LEFT] Nute Gunray, Episode I [RIGHT] A feed-for pair are back again—and up to no good—in Episode II. Playing the Neimoidian bad guys are returning actor Silas Carson (left) and newcomer David Nealey. Photo by Paul Tiller.

But Ki-Adi—we got the application down to nearly three hours. Sitting in the chair that long is just nasty, and I'd forgotten it. I just breezed into work thinking, 'Oh, my old mates are here—we're gonna have a great time with them.' Then suddenly, the stuff goes on, and I'm thinking, 'Oh, I'd forgotten this.' This time around, I had a bit of trouble because we used different glues and different removers in Australia, and I had a problem with skin allergies that suddenly arose. There were a few times when my face flared up, but it was just a question of people getting used to it again, and my skin getting used to it. It's not an easy trip getting inside all that stuff.

Once your Ki-Adi make-up is on, is it as difficult to wear as the Nute costume?

Ki-Adi, once it's on, is very easy to wear. It's very light. The skin breathes through it, and you start to forget it's there. By the end of the day, you forget you've got this thing on your face. You're pleased to get it off, because you can't scratch yourself, but it's easy to walk around—whereas with Nute, as soon as we finished the shot, I'd have to get out of it. It was hot and very, very heavy. The weight is bearing down on the top of your head and on your shoulders. But this time I prepared myself a little more. I've been doing quite a lot of working out—my undergarments didn't fit this time because I'd grown so much, so they had to make a new undergarment for me.



Well, as long as you bring it up, just what are you wearing under Nute Gunray's robes?

It's this very tight canvas leotard that holds the battery packs on the leg and has clips on the back. The main battery pack sits on the back.

You mentioned you were able to avoid the pitfalls of playing Nute Gunray this time. What were they?

This time, I was very aware of being able to get airflow, knowing how to relax inside it, because if claustrophobia comes upon you, or you get excessively hot, and you're still filming, it's going to be another 15 minutes or half an hour until you can get out. You learn how to meditate yourself into relaxing. Also, taking care to eat the right things, and drink the right isotopes and lots of water, because we had no idea the first time around what kind of toll it was going to take on our bodies—and it does take quite a toll.

There were other things, like knowing it puts a lot of pressure on your back, so every night I would get home and have a really good swim, and do a lot of work on my back in the gym, so my back wouldn't suffer so much. Last time around, we didn't know how the weight distribution would apply itself and what it would be like to be inside those very heavy costumes with silicone around you. It makes you sweat, and you lose a lot of your vitamins, and you couldn't possibly know that. But this time, I

knew, I'd put on a bit more muscle, and my back is stronger. All of that made it slightly easier, but it's still a difficult process.

What was it like recording Nute Gunray's voice for Episode I? It's quite a specific dialect that the character uses—was your direction just as specific?

George and Rick listened to all kinds of different actors from different countries voicing the words that I had spoken on the set, and eventually they decided on a Thai accent. It was very strange, because I could see all the scenes that I was in, but with this Thai actor speaking the lines I had spoken, trying to do my intonations with a heavy Thai accent—and then I had to learn his accent and re-record it. It was the most bizarre process.

I was recording for a couple of days, and it was so much fun, because in the room were just myself, George and Robin Gurland, and we just went through all these lines. Doing voice recordings is great fun—you've got this great big screen and you see the whole thing, and you're trying to lip-synch it. But you've got to hang around while people are chopping and cutting the tapes, so there's a lot of messing about to be had—and we had it.

Last time we talked, Episode I had yet to be released. Where were you when you first saw the finished film, and what did you think?

I was in L.A. I saw one of the charity previews, and it was quite amazing to be in the audience. Obviously, there were industry people there, but there were also fans who had paid a great deal of money and waited a great deal of time to be able to see the thing. And the anticipation—I mean, when I was in L.A., there were all the people camping out on the street, and one of the great things about my anonymity meant that I was able to go have a look at all this and walk down the line without getting mobbed or jumped upon.

But it was an extraordinary experience being in the audience, because when the lights went down and the music came up, people were standing up, cheering, and screaming, and it was quite odd to know that you were a part of that. I enjoyed watching it very much.

Still, it felt quite removed from what we seemed to be doing when we were filming, but then that is the nature of this kind of movie, because we do a great deal of work with bluescreens, and there was a lot of CGI. A scene looks completely different when you watch it in its final draft from what it was when you were filming it on a very bare set with costumes but sometimes no walls. On the set, there are all kinds of different people all around you, and you've just got to do your job. You're just one of those cogs in a very mighty machine, and it doesn't always make sense at the time. You have to trust George. When he says, "Stand there and look over this way," you've got to trust him that it's all going to make sense—and of course it does when it's all put together.

Was there more bluescreen work this time?

About the same, really. Still, there is a lot less than people think, because they do build these absolutely fantastic sets. There's quite a lot of work in the studio on sets as opposed to in front of bluescreens.

After Episode I, you appeared at some fan conventions. Was it what you expected?

It was great, actually. I know this is a fan magazine, so it might sound gratuitous, but it's

not—it's absolutely genuine. A lot of people had said to me that conventions are very strange, because you get all kinds of odd people approaching you, but it's really not like that at all.

One of the things that's very pleasant about it is being answerable to your audience, and it's something that few actors, especially if they are purely film and television actors, ever get to do. In the theatre, obviously, you are answerable to your audience every night, because they are there live, and people vote with their feet. If you're not coming up with a good performance, they're going to let you know. But in film and television, you don't have that. You're very detached from the whole process, and at the end of the day, you reap the rewards of reviews and fame and money, but you're not actually answerable to the people who pay for the tickets that give you, ultimately, your wage packet.

Going to conventions, I actually get to meet the people who watch the movies, and some of them are really interesting people who are a pleasure to talk to. They're not, as a lot of people make out, these strange hybrid figures who live in the dark and only come out for conventions. They know their stuff, and a lot of them are interested in artwork, and they're interested in modelmaking, or the toys, and they come to trade. It goes back for years, and it's just absolutely fascinating. And it's not just *Star Wars* at these conventions—there is all kinds of sci-fi, so walking around them is interesting, because you get to meet cartoonists and animators and artists and special effects specialists. I've met some very interesting people, and I've really enjoyed them—and I wasn't sure that I would at first.

So I take it you weren't a science-fiction fan before joining the *Star Wars* cast.

No, I never have been, but I'm learning a great deal about it now. It's a fascinating world, because I'm a very spiritual person and I read a lot of spiritualist or mythological books, and sci-fi is an extension of all of that. My oldest brother always had his nose in a



Though Carson edits both Mundi and Gungor costumes are a challenge to work in; he'll take long hours as the Jedi Master any day of the week over the confines of the heavy Helmolden mask and robes.

book like *Dune* or *2001*, and I was never really into all of that, but I'm getting to know more about it, obviously by being a part of this, and it's very interesting.

Were you part of the pick-up shooting for Episode II recently at Ealing Studios in London?

I was there for a day. It was nice to catch up with everybody. One thing I'm sure any of the actors will tell you is that we all get on so well. It's a very friendly group of people, led at the top by some really nice guys, and it's always a pleasure to get back together, because as you know this is ongoing.

The filming is ongoing because of the way in which George pastes things together. You can't see the whole at the very beginning. There are going to be tiny little bits and pieces which either are missing or need to be re-done, so there's constant re-shooting going on throughout the time they're working on post-production. It's always a pleasure to get back together again and see people—it's like having a day out.

Is it still exciting being in a *Star Wars* movie? Or is it now old hat?

Yes, it's still exciting—and I love watching who George manages to sign up. When you're working next to Christopher Lee or Tenuera Morrison or Jimmy Smits—that's the thing that surprises me, the people who want to come on board.

Was it fun working with Sam Jackson again?

Yeah, good old Sam. I got to see Sam again. He's a great guy as well. He's a very nice person. He's just so normal. He's a very down to earth, approachable, pleasant guy. We had a lot of fun together.

Now that you're a TV star in England, is it gratifying to be in a big hit where, unlike in *Star Wars*, your face is not obscured by prosthetics?

It's kind of strange when people start recognizing you on the street, but you get used to it. It's nice to be part of a very good television series, because television can be quite hit and miss, but this is a very good product, so I'm very proud to be a part of it.

It's a strange thing being in *Star Wars*, because everybody knows about *Star Wars*, yet they don't know who I am. People ask what I've been in, and I say, "Well, I was in this film called *Star Wars*," and they go, "Really?" They can't believe it. But it's very funny, because suddenly their attitude toward you changes.

I kind of like that anonymity, because on the one hand I'm very famous, and on the other hand, nobody knows who I am. I still exist in this shady underworld where I can play the game if I wish to, but I can also pull out of it if I want. But that's all changing at the moment over here, because I'm something of a television face now. So I think my days of total privacy are behind me.

Do you have any idea yet if you'll be back for Episode III?

No, I don't know yet. Your guess is as good as mine. But I hope so! ☺



the beginning, there was only one book: *Star Wars* by George Lucas. It would be years before the expanded universe exploded into the broader public consciousness, but along the way, one author would consistently add depth to the characters and situations Lucas had set in motion: As much as any author currently working in the *Star Wars* universe, Brian Daley left his permanent mark on it with his *Han Solo* adventures and his radio dramatizations of all three films, the first of which continues to rank as one of National Public Radio's highest-rated dramas of all time.

REMEMBERING BRIAN DALEY

by Michael G. Ryan

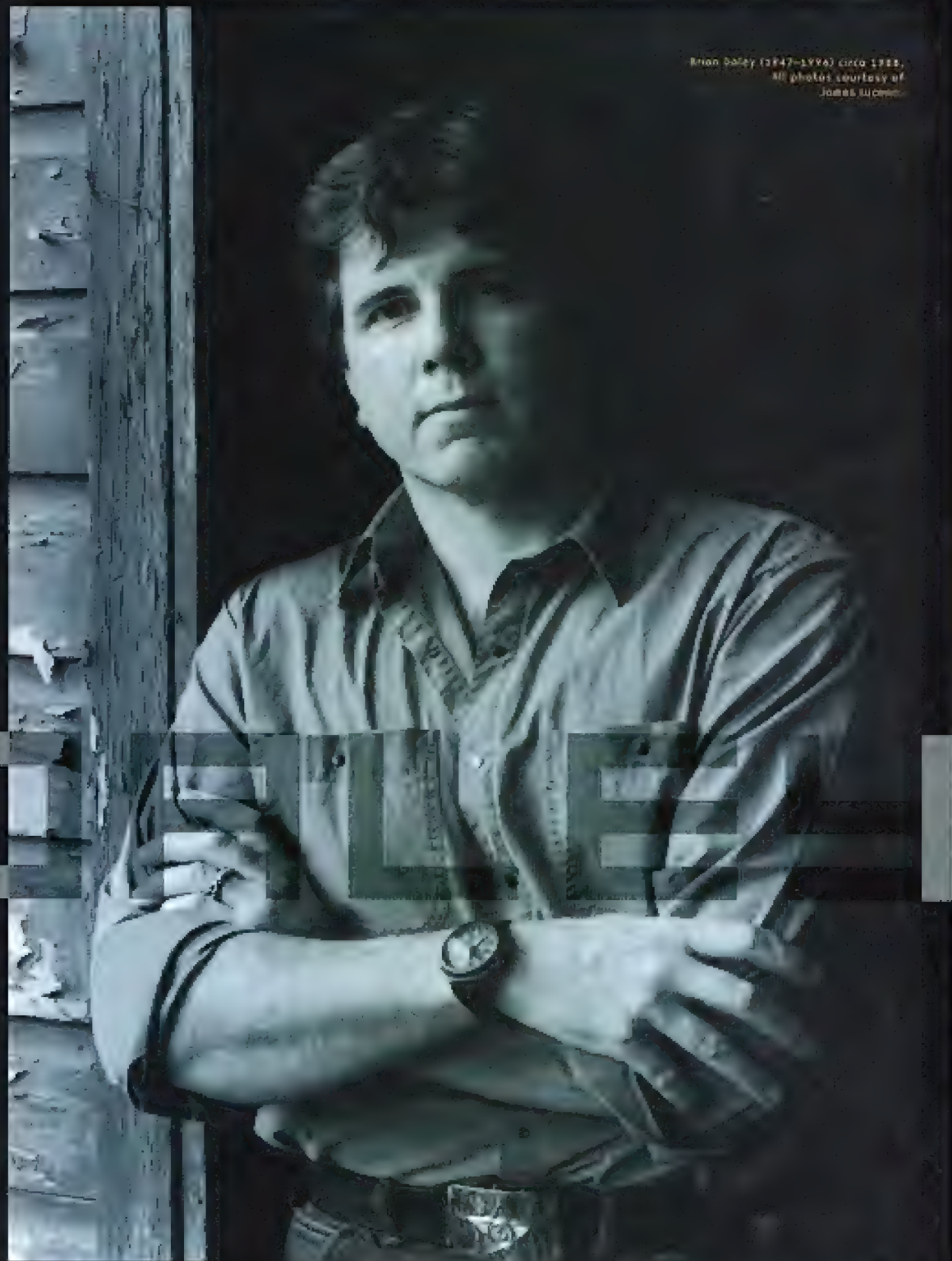
If you've been a *Star Wars* fan long enough, you may well remember the first time you encountered the work of the late author Brian Daley: In early 1979, *Han Solo at Stars' End* became only the second novel (following Alan Dean Foster's *Splinter of the Mind's Eye*) to continue telling tales in George Lucas's mythic galaxy. Unlike *Splinter*, which followed Luke and Leia in a post-*Star Wars* adventure, *Han Solo at Stars' End* went back in time to chart the Corellian smuggler's escapades in the days before he first encountered Luke Skywalker and Ben Kenobi in the Mos Eisley cantina. Two more books would follow (*Han Solo's Revenge* and *Han Solo and the Lost Legacy*), cementing Brian Daley on the map as one of readers' all-time favorite authors to expand the *Star Wars* universe. This from a man who had been a house painter, a welfare-case worker, a bartender, a loading-dock worker, a self-proclaimed "bum," and a waiter in his earlier, leaner days, a man whose claim to fame in 1979 was a pair of moderately successful fantasy novels. Now, over twenty years later, one of Brian's best friends, James Luceno, is well on his way to becoming a noted *Star Wars* author himself, with his *Cloak of Deception*, *Agents of Chaos* duology, and the e-book *Darth Maul: Saboteur* continuing to build on a galaxy his friend introduced to him back in the late 1970s. The two men would eventually pen nearly the entire *Robotech* series together.

"When we met, we were both dating women who were working as waitresses in the same restaurant in New Jersey," James recalls. "And we were both working on our first novels. The two women had become friends, and inevitably, they both realized they were dating writers."

Brian was working on his first fantasy novel (*The Drummers of Corinoride*, 1977), which chronicles the exploits of a squad of soldiers during the Vietnam War who find themselves mysteriously transported to a world of sword and sorcery; there, they must slay a dragon to return to the real world once again. The book was sufficiently popular to spawn a sequel (*The Starfollowers of Corinoride*, 1979), and the two books made Brian Daley one of the lead authors for Del Rey, an imprint of the great publishing house Ballantine. (Another of Del Rey's heavy-hitting authors at the time was Terry Brooks, who would eventually write the novelization for *The Phantom Menace*.) When the license for *Star Wars* came Del Rey's way, Brian was the first author the publishers considered, weighing not only his writing style and successes but also what they considered his ability to "click" with the *Star Wars* characters. Brian himself couldn't have been more enthusiastic—he had seen *Star Wars* with James Luceno, and from "the minute Brian saw that movie, his whole life changed. He was just enthralled by the vision that George Lucas offered. In a lot of ways, it was very close to what he was trying to do in his own fiction."

"HE WAS VERY DEDICATED TO THE TRILOGY, TO THE MYTHOS BEHIND THE STORIES AND TO THE MESSAGE OF THE STORIES THEMSELVES," —EDITOR SUE ROSTONI

Brian Doley (1947–1996) circa 1988.
All photos courtesy of
James Luceno



1996

REMEMBERING BRIAN DALEY

1947



Brian, in 1981, at the Los Angeles recording of the first *Star Wars* radio drama, for National Public Radio.

Initially, both Lucasfilm and Del Rey believed the books were going to be a trilogy about Luke Skywalker, James points out, adding, "At that point, no one knew the film was going to become such a phenomenon." In the end, however, Lucas decided to preserve his central character for the screen and focus the fiction instead on one of the supporting players in his mythos, Han Solo. This was perfect for Brian Daley, who bore some personality traits similar to Solo, not the least of which was the clever comeback. According to James Luceno, Brian "could've been a standup comic if he'd wanted to be." Furthermore, he had a very easy-going style like Han's and was something of a romantic at heart, both of which allowed him to soften some of Han's rougher, mercenary edges. Despite Brian's quick affinity for the character, there were still continuity issues to consider. "Brian's original outline called for Han doing things within the Empire," James notes, "but Lucasfilm rejected that because they weren't sure what they were going to do in the second movie. So, they wanted Brian to set those books in a different part of the galaxy, someplace that wouldn't break any of the continuity that might be established by the films."

Thus was born the Corporate Sector Authority and their stormtrooper-wannabes, the Security Police (or Espos, for short). The Empire gets a brief

mention to give the reader a perspective of the galaxy, and from then on, Brian's trilogy stays firmly rooted in previously unexplored branches of the *Star Wars* universe. (A.C. Crispin's final book in her Han Solo trilogy, *Rebel Dawn*, does a fine job of explaining how Han ended up in the Corporate Sector in the first place—to avoid getting married—and accounts for some of the gaps between Brian's books.) In addition to the continuity restrictions, Brian found himself up against an even more demanding barrier: time. He had six weeks to produce the first Han Solo book.

"Brian could be very, very fast," James Luceno says. "We had very different writing styles. Brian would sit down at a typewriter—he used a manual typewriter—and he would just hit those keys steadily for four hours where I sort of write a couple of lines, then sit back and think about it for a while. But then again, the last books he wrote in his life, a series that was finally called *Gammalaw*, he worked on for ten years. He would do it however he needed to." James found himself serving as a sounding board for *Han Solo at Stars' End* during those rushed weeks, and not long thereafter, both authors found themselves with new books on the shelves. (James Luceno's book *Headhunters*, the book he'd been working on when he first met Brian Daley years earlier, was published in 1979 as well.)

THE MINUTE BRIAN SAW THAT MOVIE [STAR WARS], HIS WHOLE LIFE CHANGED. HE WAS JUST ENTHRALLED BY THE VISION THAT GEORGE LUCAS OFFERED." —JAMES LUCENO

AT STARS' END

Brian's Han Solo trilogy was not only well received by the public (who, after an initial bit of surprise—*Splinter of the Mind's Eye* from 1978 had given the impression that all adventures to follow would, indeed, follow the original film—embraced the books with much enthusiasm), but by Lucasfilm as well. The third book wasn't even on the shelves yet when, in 1979, Carol Tidleman of Lucasfilm hired Brian to write the script for the *Star Wars* dramatization for National Public Radio. As the vice president in charge of overseeing the project, Tidleman chose Brian to draft the radio play from late 1979 until mid-March of 1980 because she could see his deft handling of the Han Solo character and his general feel for the *Star Wars* universe in his trilogy. Those thirteen half-hour episodes quickly became something unique: While retelling the by-then well-known tale of the original film, they "filled in" dozens of scenes that took place in between the established familiar moments, opening up the movie a bit. Simple throwaway lines from the film—Vader to Leia after capturing her, "You weren't on any mercy mission this time"—suddenly became

A cake created in celebration of the publication of *Han Solo at Stars' End*, 1977.



significant moments in the unfolding tale, backstory that had finally made it the forefront. (Interestingly enough, a scene that was restored to the film for its rerelease, one between Han and Jabba the Hutt, appears in the radio drama as a confrontation between Han and one of Jabba's hired thugs named Hester.) In June of 1980, Brian joined the voice cast (including Mark Hamill as Luke and Anthony Daniels as See-Threepio) in Los Angeles for two weeks of recording. Brian's job: to write "wild lines," bits of dialogue murmured and muttered by background characters in crowd scenes,



[ABOVE] Brian and Jim Luceno, with Nepalese porters, 1983. [BELOW] From left to right: Brian Daley, Jim Luceno, Chris Barbieri, and photographer Joel Simon, in Guatemala, 1994. Chris is the illustrator who created the maps for the New Jedi Order series.



1994

REMEMBERING BRIAN DALEY

1996

[illegible]



[FACING] The original poster advertising the first Star Wars radio dramatization. **[ABOVE]** Each installment's script is available in a trade paperback, audio CD, or cassette.

cancer, not a month after he was diagnosed, they began to pursue it again." Nearly ten years had passed between *Empire* and *Jedi*.

When NPR finally found the money for the ROTJ budget, Brian's involvement as the writer of the scripts was instrumental in convincing Anthony Daniels to return to reprise his role as See-Threepio. Daniels felt that Brian "had a real ability to capture Threepio's strange mixture of humorless comedy, his oddly bleak but loving personality. No other writer has been able to do this for Threepio, outside his movie incarnation. Only Brian, at the end of the Ewok storytelling scene, could find a radio way of capturing the droid's deeply felt frustration with Han Solo." With Brian on board—though his illness prevented him from being present in Los Angeles for the recording of the six chapters of *Jedi*—Daniels felt that the final chapter of the Star Wars radio saga was in good hands.

"I talked to him on the phone many times during his work on *Jedi*," says Sue Rostoni, an editor at Lucas Licensing; she served as Brian's editor in 1995 as he developed that final script. "His timeframe to work on this was pretty short, so whenever he needed information, he called me. He struck me as a very warm man, very much into Star Wars. There were parts of himself that he brought to the *Return of the Jedi* script that wouldn't have been there if someone else had worked on it."

While Brian's illness was not a secret, he maintained an impressive level of professionalism during the process of writing and rewriting,

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

[VADER THEME SMASHES IN. VADER BREATHES UP CLOSE.]

R2: ***

VADER: Greetings, Brian. I kneel before you and await your orders to execute your wish. **[FACE BREATHING & MUSIC UNDER]**

3PO: Yes. I think he did an excellent job. But... well... I think he gave you rather too many lines.

R2:!

BROCK: **[CONTINUING]** Brian, this is Brock... Get well... Rejoin us, soon... Love...

3PO: Just you watch your language!

R2: ** *** **

[FADE UP EMERPEL'S THEME & HOLD UNDER]

3PO: Ohh. That is a good idea. Artoo, Um, let me see, Um, um. **[TAPS THE MICROPHONE TENTATIVELY]** Hello? Um.

R2: **

EMPEROR: **[FALLING ACOUSTIC]** Brian... Your overlord the Emperor is pleased... with his lines, and commands you to get well, be well, to stay well...

3PO: Um, Ready? **[CONFIDENTLY]** Master Brian, Artoo and I want to say that it has been a distinct honor and a joy to work with you.

[FADE MUSIC]

R2: **

[ECHOING ATMOS]

R2: *** **

3PO: With our thanks, we send you our very best wishes. **[PAUSES, THEN TO ARTOO]** There!

[SERVO MOTORS APPROACHING]

3PO: **[CALLING]** Artoo? Artoo-Detoo? What you doing here, in an empty chamber?

R2: ****?

R2: ** *** **

3PO: No, you can't have another retake, Artoo! Oh really? **[HIS VOICE FADES AS THEY LEAVE]** The trouble with you is, Hollywood has affected your circuits. You have become ridiculously starstruck... **[A DISTANT DOOR CLOSING BEHIND THEM]**

3PO: Rehearsing for your next scene? But Artoo, we have finished recording *Return of the Jedi*.

R2: ***

[GRUNTS]

3PO: Oh don't be sad, Artoo. We had a lot of fun, didn't we? And all because of Master Brian.

focusing not on the severity of his illness but on the writing at hand. "I think it kept him alive those last few weeks or months," Sue says. "It was very, very important to him that this be done. He was calm but energetic, very present—he didn't even sound ill. In fact, we didn't even talk about his illness; we just talked about Star Wars. He talked often about what it brought to him."

In the end, it was as much about what Brian brought to Star Wars as what it brought to him; the cast and crew of the radio dramas held him in the highest regard, and his presence and skills were sorely missed at the recording of the final installment of the radio trilogy. Anthony Daniels describes, in his introduction to the published *Return of the Jedi* radio dramatization (Del Rey), how Brian was kept apprised of progress via daily telephone calls, but more important, how the cast convened on the last Saturday of recording to prepare a special tape for Brian, one that conveyed their appreciation for his talents and their affection for and admiration of the man who possessed them. As Daniels says, "The finished tape would be sent to Brian as our way of saying 'You were with us all the way.'" (See sidebar for the complete transcript of that special tape.) Regrettably, Brian would never hear

"BRIAN HAD A REAL ABILITY TO CAPTURE THREEPIO'S STRANGE MIXTURE OF HUMOR, LESS COMEDY, HIS ODDLY BLEAK BUT LOVING PERSONALITY." —ANTHONY DANIELS

the finished tape, completed on that last day of recording—he died that March night in 1996, in his home in Arnold, Maryland. His longtime companion, historical novelist Lucia St. Clair Robson, was with him. He was forty-eight years old. He'd been a full-time writer for nearly twenty years, almost since *Star Wars* itself began.

A WIND TO SHAKE THE STARS

As James Luceno's books in the *Star Wars* universe begin to generate their own fan following, he is quick to point out that he owes a great debt to Brian Daley for introducing him to science fiction in the first place. "The books I used to write were adventure novels set in different parts of the world," he says. "But Brian was doing some script work for an animated TV series called *The Adventures of the Galaxy Rangers*," and he basically browbeat me into joining him in working on that. I had no confidence that I could do it, but we each ended up writing seven scripts for that series. Then, shortly after the series ended, *Robotech* came along, and Del Rey had the license to the *Robotech* series. They knew we'd worked together already, and they wanted us to join up again. As a result, we ended up doing quite a few projects together, including *The Black Hole Travel Agency* series. More important, we'd been talking about *Star Wars* a lot, because frankly, we thought that we were going to write those early novels that restarted the universe...."

In addition to the *Robotech* and *Black Hole Travel Agency* books (all of which were published under Brian's pen name, Jack McKinney), Brian wrote many other science fiction and fantasy novels during his career—*A Tapestry of Magic* (1983), the novelization for the film *Tron* (1982), the *Floyd and Fitzhugh* trilogy (1985-87), for example. But he will be best remembered for his contributions to the *Star Wars* universe, a universe that was virtually unexplored when he began to chronicle Han Solo's exploits. Under slightly different circumstances, he might have still been chronicling those adventures when the expanded universe plan took off in earnest in 1991 with Timothy Zahn's *Heir to the Empire*. Del Rey, the Ballantine imprint for which Brian had penned the Han Solo trilogy, had retained the license to *Star Wars* novels, and Brian was tapped to write those first books that would relaunch the *Star Wars* universe. Unfortunately, an apparent internal political battle at Ballantine led to the loss of the license, so despite the publisher's intentions to use both Brian and James Luceno to write the new novels, the universe began again under

Bantam and Timothy Zahn's vision. "He'd done a lot of thinking about what he wanted to write in the universe," James Luceno says of Brian's preparations to write more *Star Wars* novels. "He would've tried to give it more of a mythological tone. I'm a fan of Tim Zahn's work, and I think the difference would've been that it wouldn't have been military science fiction, but more of the mythical fantasy that Lucas demonstrated in the films. More quests, more about the Jedi Knights. Have Luke put together a sort of Knights of the Round Table, which Bantam eventually did anyway."

James concedes that Brian wasn't much of a fan of the approach that Bantam eventually took, though in time he might've come around. "He felt that the expanded universe had gone off course," he says. "I think he would've been much happier if he had been around to see it go the way of *The New Jedi Order*. He would've wanted to see



Jim Luceno, Chris Barbieri, and Brian Daley, atop Temple I in Tikal, Guatemala, 1994.

more of a serialized expansion of that universe, not in bits and pieces, falling back and filling in parts. Something that would move steadily forward, as *The New Jedi Order* does. He would've liked that."

Brian's Han Solo trilogy and all three of his radio dramatizations have been reprinted in recent years, the former as both individual books and a single volume, a steady reminder of his contribution to George Lucas's ever-growing universe. Instead of seeming quaint, his Han Solo books have instead become iconic, adding terminology and technology that are still used in the *Star Wars* worlds (the swoop bikes from *Han Solo's Revenge*, for example, predated *Return of the Jedi's* speeder bikes by a good four years). And the radio dramas sold astonishingly well when released to CD a few years ago.

"He was very dedicated to the trilogy, to the mythos behind the stories, and to the message of the stories themselves," editor Sue Rostoni says of Brian Daley. "It seemed like it was part of him, and in the same way, he'll always be a part of *Star Wars*." 🌌

STAR WARS ON THE MUPPET



PET SHOW

May the Foam be with You

The Force met the foam in a magical episode of The Muppet Show over 20 years ago. Now, it's time to light the lightsabers as a new home video release brings the fun back to our galaxy, and the Insider and the show's stars look back.



by Tom Harkin





"Go along with this or I'll cut you in half."
—Miss Piggy to Luke Skywalker

[ABOVE] Chewbacca, Mark Hamill, C-3PO, R2-D2, Angus McGonagle, Dr. Strange-pork, Piggy, Kermit, Berth Hoder, Link, and a couple of bizarre foam aliens perform "When You Wish Upon a Star" in the episode's final production number. [BELOW] Berth Hoder's surprise appearance fills cast members with fear, dread, and confusion.

Remember the time Luke Skywalker, on a rescue mission, journeyed across the galaxy aboard a ship piloted by pigs? No? Well, how about the time C-3PO, R2-D2, and the mighty Chewbacca, faced with uncommon adversity on the planet Koozebane, struck back at a Sith Lord with an aggressive song-and-dance number? Doesn't ring a bell? Well, surely you must know about Luke Skywalker's identical cousin, Mark?

Okay, if you don't remember, you're probably not alone. These adventures happened—but not in any *Star Wars* movie, comic, or book. Instead it all happened on a 1980 episode of the weird and wonderful classic TV series *The Muppet Show*.

Still, ask any *Star Wars* fan how many collaborative projects there were between George Lucas and the late, great Muppets creator Jim Henson, and there's a good chance even die-hard fans will cite only the 1986 fantasy/adventure film *Labyrinth*, but

come up empty after that. Indeed, *Labyrinth* was the only project where both visionaries had a personal hand in shaping the core of the product.

But many first-generation fans and completist video collectors can tell you of that wondrous evening in 1980 when the *Star Wars* and Muppet universes intersected in a magical science-fiction/comedy/variety jamboree.

Muppet performer Dave Goetz, who plays Gonzo the Great, told the *insider* that a Muppet-*Star Wars* crossover was a natural at the time. Comparing the core group of Muppets (Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy, Fozzie Bear, Gonzo, and Scooter) with the core group of *Star Wars* heroes (Luke, Leia, Han, Chewie, and the droids), Goetz said, "They were loyal, and both groups had a very positive message to give. That's different than much of the culture today, but one thing we were able to do in the '70s was be positive and truthful at the same time."



Although more than two decades have since elapsed, the enduring appeal of both the Muppets and *Star Wars* makes it a nostalgic look back at this remarkable half-hour of felt-and-foam fantasy long overdue—and a new video from Time-Life makes it possible with the episode's first-ever home video release!

IN A VAUDEVILLE HOUSE FAR, FAR AWAY....

Like all *Muppet Show* episodes before it, this fourth season installment (the series ran in syndication for five seasons from 1976-1981) begins with Scooter (performed by late Muppeteer Richard Hunt) knocking on the celebrity guest star's door and announcing, "Thirty seconds to curtain." But as if the Muppet studios are consciously teasing us, this time the guest Scooter's addressing is actually the craggy-faced, purple "Angus McGonagle"—another Muppet!

By evening's end, we will learn that Angus is ancient-looking and Scottish because he is an "Argyle Gargoyle." But, like Darth Vader in the movies, his true character is revealed to us only a layer at a time. Clearly Lucas' influence is present in the episode.

At this point in the original broadcast, most *Star Wars* fans were panicking that the TV Guide was somehow wrong—that maybe the actual *Star Wars* show would have to wait for another week. Yet almost before Angus can

speak (and disappointed fans can change the channel), the wall of the star's dressing room is blasted from behind, and in marches galactic hero Luke Skywalker, with C-3PO and R2-D2 in tow, riding on a satisfying seven-note blast of John Williams' immortal *Star Wars* score.

Scooter, as if reading viewers' minds, concludes that we now have three far-greater guests than an unknown elderly Scot and promptly ushers the chagrined McGonagle from the dressing room. Luke (played, of

Get Your Copy Right Here

Throw out those muddy eBay-bought copies—the *Star Wars* episode of *The Muppet Show* is now available by mail-order from Time-Life Video as part of their "Best of The Muppet Show" series. No need to join anything to get the *Star Wars* tape; just go to www.time-lifegroup.com and select Tape 2 from the "Best of The Muppet Show" collection. You can also call Time-Life at (800) 621-7226.

The tape (which is \$19.99) features two additional episodes. One is hosted by Paul Simon (one-time husband of Carrie Fisher), and the tape ends with Raquel Welch—whose closest *Star Wars* connection seems to be appearing in *Naked Gun 2½ 1/3—The Final Insult*, which also featured James Earl Jones. (Okay, at this point we're just playing "Six Degrees of Bepin Station.")



Chewbacca (Peter Mayhew) and R2-D2 struggle through a mandatory dance routine.



EVERY LITTLE THING COUNTS

As with the *Star Wars* movies, the Muppet universe is brought to life by putting effort into every aspect of the show, no matter how seemingly minor. Some examples of the stuff that might slip by the untrained eye:

- 1 It is a tribute to the Muppet company's attention to detail that they selected and cleared the rights to an actual George Gershwin song for Hamill and McGonagle to gargle. The song is "Summertime" from the opera *Porgy & Bess*, and if you wish to sing along with the episode, the lyrics are:

*"Summertime, and the livin' is easy,
Fish are plentiful, and the cotton is high,
Oh, ya, daddy's rich, and ya, ma is good-looking,
So hush little baby, don't you cry."*

- 2 There are a few scenes in the episode with no *Star Wars* content: two musical numbers ("Papa-Lama Ding-Dong" performed by sheep and "Three Little Fishes"), a "Muppet News" flash, and quips from Statler and Waldorf, the old guys (played by Hunt & Henson) famous for heckling the show from their theater box. An additional song, "Six String Orchestra" starring Scooter, would appear to be unrelated to *Star Wars* except for the posters on the wall behind him—a black-and-white photo of Luke, and a *Star Destroyer* picture which has for some reason been hung upside down! Could the picture's placement symbolize the Muppeteers' intention to turn the *Star Wars* saga upside-down?

- 3 One of the more striking images from the episode is what Peter Mayhew called Chewbacca's "Wookiee Waltz." Gracious to a fault, Mayhew declined all opportunities to blame the bizarre dance on the weight of the costume (only 15 or 20 pounds of mohair), admitting to the *Insider*, "I have got two left feet."

- 4 The plot device of Hamill and Skywalker being separate characters grew out of *The Muppet Show*'s famous willingness to accommodate its guest stars. Scheduled guests would be asked what Muppet they most wanted to work with, and even invited into the writing process on occasion. As Dave Goetz, the Muppet performer behind Gonzo (and Derth Nader), told the *Insider*, "Mark Hamill was concerned at the time about being typecast. He was rightfully concerned about being identified forever as Luke Skywalker, so for that reason, they wrote a dual storyline. Our whole stance was, we wanted guest stars to be able to do what they wanted to do."

- 5 The planet Koozbania has been featured in more than one *Muppet Show* episode. In fact, it pre-dates any *Star Wars* planet by several years, having first appeared in *The Muppet Valentine Special*, which aired on ABC in 1974.

course, by Mark Hamill in full Bespin fatigues) comments that they've landed on "some sort of comedy-variety show planet," and we launch into the show's beloved, "sensational, celebrational, Muppetational" opening theme song.

After the opening and a commercial break, host Kermit (performed by the late Jim Henson) announces the new-and-improved guest lineup to a delighted audience over the fervent objections of McGonagle, who demands to perform his trademark act of "Gangling Gershwin." The exasperated emcee shoos McGonagle away.

Backstage, C-3PO (played, as always, by Anthony Daniels) ingratiates himself to Kermit, "who's given so much joy to the universe," and announces the Rebels' purpose for being there: Chewbacca, pleading for assistance from across hyperspace, has been kidnapped by "a bunch of weird turkeys," naturally leading our heroes to the vicinity of the Muppet Theater. Just then, an overexcited Luke bursts in—and out—of the backstage area in a fit of overacting.

Luke and the droids (R2 was a remote-controlled unit, without actor Kenny Baker

THE MUPPET CONNECTION

Mixing *Star Wars* with the Muppets wasn't just a one-time great idea. In 1979, when the episode was taped, the opportunity to collaborate on *The Muppet Show* was too perfect to pass up on several counts. Muppet performer Frank Oz had just recently joined team *Star Wars* as Yoda's performer.

The desire to compare fancy puppets must have been overwhelming for artists on both sides of the Lucas-Henson connection. Indeed, although Luke and the droids had to journey across hyperspace to find the Muppet Theater, the *Star Wars* cast only had to walk across the road—*The Muppet Show* was taped at ATV studios in Borehamwood, England, part of the Elstree Studios complex where much of the original *Star Wars* trilogy was made! As Anthony Daniels told the *insider*, "I could almost have used my old dressing room, but might have caused a snafu crossing the road."

The connection between the two worlds must have stayed in people's minds. When *The Empire Strikes Back* was released in May 1980, some fans misheard the line spoken by a badly reassembled and angry C-3PO, believing he'd called Chewie an "overgrown Muppet." (The actual epithet was "maphead.")

So although no Muppet reference really made it in to the saga, more tenuous connections between the two worlds abound. Some examples:

❶ One of the most interesting and tantalizing connections between the two worlds was the very first to occur: Henson was the first person asked by Lucas to create and perform the new character of Yoda. Having a company to run, he deferred to Oz. A fan can't help but wonder how the saga would look with that "father" Yoda that might have been. (For more on Yoda's genesis, see Frank Oz's interview in *Star Wars* Insider #42.)

❷ C-3PO and R2 appeared on *Sesame Street* (which, of course, starred many Muppets) in 1981, about a year after the *Muppet Show* episode. After landing their craft on the far side of the wooden fence, they meet Big Bird, who at first can't get the *Sesame Street* adults to believe droids exist (a twist on the classic "Snuffleupagus" theme). Soon, the Bird helps his mechanical friends locate and deliver a message to Oscar the Grouch—an interstellar, holographic communiqué from "Lothar the

ANTHONY DANIELS

Talks About

THE MUPPETS

Anthony Daniels played C-3PO twice with the Muppets, once on *The Muppet Show* and again on *Sesame Street*. Both times, he co-starred with a remote-controlled R2-D2 and a host of creatures the actor remembers fondly. The *insider* caught up with Daniels recently to reminisce about his dances with Muppets, and he sent us these answers in true *Wonder Column* style.

Had *The Muppet Show* and *Sesame Street* come to the UK at the time of your appearances, or were you in the dark about just who your co-stars were? If you were familiar with them, what was your impression of the Muppets?

I was such a fan of the Muppets that I had to suppress my uncool excitement when I arrived at the studio—didn't want to look like a deranged fan. I think they guessed anyway. I'd always loved the characters and the scripts were just off-the-wall enough to be outstanding. These days most things are off-the-wall, but back then...

Did you interact much with Jim Henson outside of rehearsal and taping? What do you remember most about him?

Grouch," a cranky fuzzball from the "Zicon system" who talks like Jimmy Durante and whose message turns out to be "Got lost!" A game of Blind-Man's Bluff leads to further comedy as Big Bird mistakes a mailbox and a lamppost for the intrepid droids.

⑤ The aforementioned fantasy feature *Labyrinth* was directed by Jim Henson and executive-produced by George Lucas in the first—and sadly last—direct collaboration between the two. The film starred Jennifer Connelly and David Bowie, along with a host of Henson Creature Shop creations.

⑥ The *Dark Crystal*, Henson's lush, lavish fantasy feature film from 1982, was produced by Gary Kurtz, producer of *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and Lucas' *American Graffiti*. Frank Oz, of course, performed in the film and co-directed it with Henson, and *Star Wars* sound designer Ben Burtt co-created the film's rich soundscape with Nicholas Stevenson.

⑦ Muppet co-star Will Lee, who portrayed the beloved storekeeper Mr. Hooper for the first 14 years of *Sesame Street*, was acting men-

tor to James Earl Jones at the American Theatre Wing. Jones would return the favor by becoming *Sesame Street*'s very first celebrity guest in 1969.

⑧ Frank Oz has gone on to be a big-name Hollywood director, but *Star Wars* fans know he didn't really make his mark until 1985's *The Indian in the Cupboard*, in which a collection of toys that come to life include a Darth Vader action figure, who swings his lightsaber (at BoboCop) like the same bad dude he always was—even though Yoda is directing him! Oz also directed Ian McDiarmid (Palpatine) in 1988's *Star Wars* Martin comedy *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* and Terence Stamp (Valorum) in the 1999 Martin comedy *Bowfinger*.

⑨ The Gonzo/Nader connection is hinted at again in *Muppets From Space*, when a pair of spaceborne "cosmic fish" leave Gonzo with the enigmatic advice "May the Fish Be With You." (Owners of the *Muppets From Space* DVD can catch a couple of bonus *Star Wars* references on the "Live Video Commentary" featuring Kermit, Gonzo, Rizzo the Rat, and director Tim Hill.)

inside) continue prowling backstage in search of Chewbacca, and Kermit implores the heroes to contribute to the show by performing a song. Luke, no entertainer, disappears to fetch terrestrial actor Mark Hamill—his identical, sweater-vest-wearing cousin Hamill's valiant efforts at impressions, singing, dancing, and comedy so thoroughly unimpressed Kermit that he ejects the tow-headed leading man from the theater. Luke enters immediately thereafter, reinforcing the running gag that he and Mark are not likely to be seen together.

Meanwhile, in all the commotion of disappearing, reappearing and threatening one another with blasters, the main stage has been abandoned. McGonagle seizes the opportunity to gargle a nice round of Gershwin and is soon joined onstage by Hamill, gargling away. Kermit, keeping a cool head, dispatches Electric Mayhem drummer Animal (puppeteered, like Yoda, by Frank Oz) to chase the miscreants off the stage and into the next commercial break.

Backstage, a horrified Kermit learns that in his desperation to save Chewbacca, Luke has

There was so little time to do anything but work on the show, since their taping schedule was punitive. They kept recording show after show and we were just the next in line. They made us feel pretty special, but I suspect they did that for all their guests. It was such an accolade to be on their show, but they had real respect for us. The real time that we could relax was at the post-production dinner at Julie's in London. The restaurant's huge oak table sits around 30 and we filled it and the room with laughter. And not a Muppet in sight. The cast and crew, in front of or behind the camera, were all remarkable and funny people.

Did you notice any difference in Frank Oz as a performer when he was doing Miss Piggy from when he does Yoda?

When I first met Miss Piggy, she was already firmly attached to Frank Oz and had been for years, so we found it difficult to be alone together. I sensed she wanted to share. I know that she liked Mark a lot—until he made an unfortunate remark about the bacon rolls they rather tactlessly served in the canteen. She's sensitive—for a pig. And when Frank wasn't there, she seemed somehow, empty. With a star like her, it's all too easy to ignore the self-effacing man at her side, the genius behind her talent. But that's what performing a character is about. So you did tend to look at the pig. Likewise, you look at Yoda.

I know it was a challenge for Frank to characterize something so old and green. I was very flattered when he asked me how I came up with C-3PO's voice. He was searching for a voice for Yoda at the time, as was George. Of course, being asked for advice by such an accomplished performer hushed me to incoherence. But we talked about believing in the

characters we played and their own personalities rather than ours. I don't think I helped much but was delighted when they realized that everything about his voice and his timing was the character.

Henson and Lucas both earned reputations as visionary perfectionists. Did you find any interesting common denominator in the way they envisioned or created their projects?

It was one of the most disciplined shows I ever did. Each member of the cast was a perfectionist who respected the needs and performances of the other cast members—a really professional group led by Jim. I think his weird imagination spurred everyone on, and he surrounded himself with talented and dedicated artists. I think George has done that too. It's a good recipe for success.

Did you actually do your own tap-dancing for *The Muppet Show*? Had you studied or performed dance in the past?

I was in a production of *The Boyfriend* as the tapping, Charlestoning Bobbie (a long time ago), so I agreed that I would tap-dance in character. I rehearsed alone with the choreographer and without the gold suit—I know fairly well what is and is not possible when I'm wearing it. Come the day, I thought I did it surprisingly well on take one, all things considered. There isn't a lot of space to flex your muscles inside the suit and it's a heavy. Take two was good too, but for technical reasons we eventually got to take six. Fortunately we didn't do a take seven. I was already a wreck.

—CONTINUATION OF PAGE 10

hijacked the *Swine Trek*, flagship of the Muppets' "Pigs In Space" recurring segment. The ship's original commissioned crew (Captain Link Hogthrob, First Mate Piggy, and Dr. Julius Strangepork) make a valiant try to regain control, only to be seduced by the charisma of Luke (in Hogthrob's and Piggy's case) and R2 (in Strangepork's). Before the mêlée can be fully resolved, we suddenly meet the episode's central villain—a lesser-known Sith Lord by the name of "Derth Nader" (whose mask is shaped suspiciously like the face of daredevil Muppet Gonzo the Great).

In the confusion, the *Swine Trek* is sucked into the planet Koozebane's gravity well, necessitating a crash-landing on its surface. Having evacuated the craft, the squabbling crews attempt to take shelter in a cave, only to find Nader has beaten them to the punch. Their lives in danger, and their weapons jammed by Nader's transmitter, all seems lost until, at last, Chewbacca makes his triumphant entrance. Exactly who held him prisoner is never revealed, but they took his bandolier.

Seizing Nader, Chewie (Peter Mayhew again under the mohair suit) attempts to dismember the villain, but the Wookiee is immobilized by the agonizing gargling of Angus McGonagle, now revealed to be in the thrall of the dark tyrant. The tables turned yet again, Luke asks

SHOOTING GONZO into THE CANON

Any *Star Wars* project authorized by Lucasfilm, and featuring *Star Wars* characters, can surely be placed into the formal, official canon of the *Star Wars* universe. Even the infamous "Star Wars Holiday Special" (Lucas has basically stated he would like to track down every copy and smash them all with a hammer) has dribbled into the official *Star Wars* canon: many *Star Wars* novels, comics and reference sources make explicit mention of Chewie's family and the Wookiee holiday of "Life Day" that originated in the "Holiday Special."

Surely, a Muppets/*Star Wars* crossover is of far more cultural import than that particularly disastrous 1978 meal ticket for a young Bruce Vilanch (who wrote for the special, and as such the *Star Wars* episode of *The Muppet Show* must be placed as precisely as possible in the canon. Needless to say, one of the important facts to establish is just when in the classic trilogy timeline this event takes place.

That the episode takes place after Episode IV: *A New Hope* is obvious: The characters all know each other. Placing it more precisely than that is a bit more tricky. The four *Star Wars* characters involved were together for a long time—until Chewie's novelized death 25 years later, in fact.

Though nothing found by our research department constitutes proof, a lot of clues point to the likelihood that the events of the episode occurred sometime before *Empire*. Though none are proof in themselves, in aggregate they paint quite a compelling picture:

1. Timing—The show was aired between the theatrical releases of Episodes IV and V—scant weeks before *Empire* opened, in fact.

2. Haircuts—Luke's outfit cannot be ignored in trying to canonize the events: It is clearly the same make and cut of his "Bespin Fatigues" outfit, which was otherwise seen only in *Empire*—and damaged to the point of worthlessness by the end of that film. If there was concrete evidence that Luke's Muppet Show outfit is the exact same one as his *Empire* outfit, that ought to settle the mystery, but there isn't any such evidence. It does, however, seem unlikely that Luke would restore and/or replace the outfit in which he suffered the worst day of his life. From a strictly psychological viewpoint, it is hard to see the Muppet events transpiring after *The Empire* struck back. For further confirmation, it's worth noting that when a lovestruck Miss Piggy (played by Oz) attempts to impersonate Princess Leia to impress Luke, she likewise chooses the classic *New Hope* hairdo and ambassadorial robes.

How did the *Sesame Street* episode compare with your *Muppet Show* experience?

Sesame was truly a remarkable experience. If the Muppet gang was dedicated, the cast and crew of *Sesame* were devoted and delightful. I wanted to stay with them forever. A great sense of teamwork. It was great to bond with Big Bird. R2 bonded with a fire hydrant. Typical!

Was there anything particularly challenging or surprising about working with the Muppets?

Possibly the greatest danger in working with the Muppets is that they make you laugh a lot, which can ruin a take. The other slight danger is that the sets are built up quite high, so the operators are standing below the humans. Given the limited vision I have in the suit, it would have been all too easy to fall into the pit at my feet. I'm sure Frank would have made a soft landing, but Piggy would not have been amused.

You've mentioned in the past that the Muppet organization was very pleasant to work with and the people were used to performers in costume. What did they do that made your work easier?

For once, I wasn't the only one in a really difficult costume, and at least I didn't have someone's hand stuck up somewhere unmentionable, like Piggy did. Their organization was constantly aware that people wearing weird, restrictive costumes need rather more care than a normally dressed actor, able to take care of himself. There's a lot of physical strain in Muppeting. For example, try standing with your arms up in the air with a pig at the far end. And the concentration of getting a character through voice and movement needs to be, well, concentrated.

Their production had deep respect for the actors who created such strange characters and performed them on the set. I really did feel at home there.

C-3PO's experiences with puppets seem to have rubbed off on him when he became a puppet in Episode I, and now you've controlled the puppet a bit yourself for Episode II. Did you feel the puppet's movements were an accurate simulation of your own in Episode I, and did you have any experience with puppetry before Episode II?

C-3PO seemed a little awkward to me in Episode I. When I mentioned it to George he said, "What do you expect? He's just been built by an eight year-old!" Nuff said. So I did suggest I would puppeteer in this current movie. But I didn't aim to replicate anything from Episode I.

2 Psychology —It seems that coming face-to-face with a villain so reminiscent of his own father would spark deep emotional conflict, Oedipal or otherwise, in Luke. But he stands up to Darth Nader in classic heroic style. Hence, it seems unlikely that Luke had learned the true identity of his father at this time, once again suggesting a pre-*Empire* time frame.

The fact that Luke and the droids went out in search of Chewie, instead of the more obvious Han, is also rather striking. Han must have been occupied with extremely pressing matters to be unable to participate in a rescue mission for the most important figure in his life at that time. Whatever Han was involved in, he seems to have taken the *Millennium Falcon* with him.

A reasonable guess is that the hyperspace telegram was received sometime after the events of *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* (the first original *Star Wars* novel, which ended with Luke, R2 and C-3PO together).

Knowing where Koozebane and Earth are in relation to the *Star Wars* galaxy would be an enormous help in canonizing the program. For now, all that's known is that at least these four *Star Wars* characters did make their way to Earth—and C-3PO mentions during his dance that he "once saw a *Fred Astaire* film".

Darth Nader is undeniably the most enigmatic figure in this episode. No other mention of him exists in the *Star Wars* universe, so his origins and eventual fate can only be subjects of speculation. His appearance and behavior suggest a familiarity, if not actual involvement, with both Darth Vader and Gonzo the Great. The possibility that he is an evil clone of Gonzo cannot be ruled out.

1999's *Muppets from Space* reveals that Gonzo is an extraterrestrial creature, but otherwise leaves many questions unanswered. Dave Goetz informed the *Insider* that Gonzo's homeworld is called "Goznog," which has yet to appear in the *Star Wars* canon.

Some have speculated that the title of "Darth" is an abbreviation of "DARK lord of the UTH." By this logic, "Darth" may be a lesser honorific indicating a "DERivative" lord, which Nader assuredly is. Whether he is master or apprentice remains unclear. We can only assume Episodes II and III, chronicling the Clone Wars, will clear the matter up, possibly with a young Nader commanding a mighty army of soldier-chickens to exterminate the Jedi.

Our magazine's inquiries to onetime Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader went unanswered. (Like an election isn't enough, he has to spoil our article, too?) A relationship between Ralph and Darth cannot be proven, but it seems significant that Ralph hosted *Saturday Night Live* in its second season, only a year after the *Muppets* were a regular feature on the program.

Further complicating the episode's trappings is the revelation that Mark Hamill and Luke are in fact cousins. On whose side of Luke's family? Could he be Owen and Beru's son? Once again, we must wait for the remaining prequels.

plaintively, "What could possibly get us out of this?" The answer is an extended musical number featuring a medley of songs with "star" in the title, commendable tap-dancing from C-3PO, and a soft-shoe from Chewie that, frankly, makes R2's dancing seem graceful.

With Darth Nader vanquished by the power of the production number, Kermit thanks Luke for saving the day, and in a surprise ending, Luke thanks his "cousin" Mark Hamill by welcoming him on stage next to him. Thanks to some fancy photography, Luke and Mark stand side by side for a moment before Luke leaves in a huff. A tuxedo-clad Mark sticks around for the closing credits, surrounded by a host of *Muppets* including the aliens of Koozebane and an unmasked Darth Nader. ☾

Tim Harrod writes for *The Onion*. Photos courtesy of Steve Sansweet and Les David.

Luke Skywalker prepares to unleash his secret weapon on Darth Nader—Chewbacca the Wookiee.



I'd puppeteered various sequences in *Empire*, when I wasn't in the costume but lying on the floor with my hand running up through Threepio's chest, and in other ways. It's tedious when actors drone on about what a challenge they have had to face but manipulating See-Through-Pio was indeed a challenge.

There is no time to rehearse on the set, so I spent hours fighting the puppet in front of a huge mirror in the Creature Shop in Sydney. Zed Selekuk and others gave me feedback on what did and didn't work—mostly what didn't! Anna Biles redesigned the harness and we managed to adjust the load bearing so it didn't cripple me. But I was in the gym at the hotel around 5 or 6 every morning to strengthen my legs and arms and, everything. The puppet weighs about as much as I do and stuck on my front at about 12 inches away, he represented quite a threat. Dealing with your own gravitational forces is one thing but...

Anyway, the rehearsals paid off, even though George surprised me in one scene by suddenly asking me to perform it sitting down. A whole new set of problems. But the worst was not being able to look at whom C-3PO was talking to. His head was in the way. Obviously, I caught glimpses of my fellow actors through his whirling, wire-filled cranium. Similarly the puppet hands were out of my vision, again hidden by his rudely sitting directly in front of me. I think it worked. Anyway, George can cut out the wonky bits in the edit suite. He could, of course, cut me out altogether!

Do you think the *Swine Trek* (the *Muppet* space ship) could defeat the *Millennium Falcon* in a fight?

I loved the *Swine Trek* and its crazy opening title... "PIIIIIIGGGSSS IN SPPP-PAWACCCCCCE..." I loved its warm, retro '50s look and the absurd controls and dials. The *Millennium Falcon* was made for a grey and harsher world, but their great similarity was that they were both made out of plywood. I found them burning the *Falcon* one day on the back lot. It made me sad. I picked up some mementos of the trusty ship. I never got a piece of the *Swine Trek*. But I have the memories. And I still have the silver Kermit they gave over dinner at Julie's.

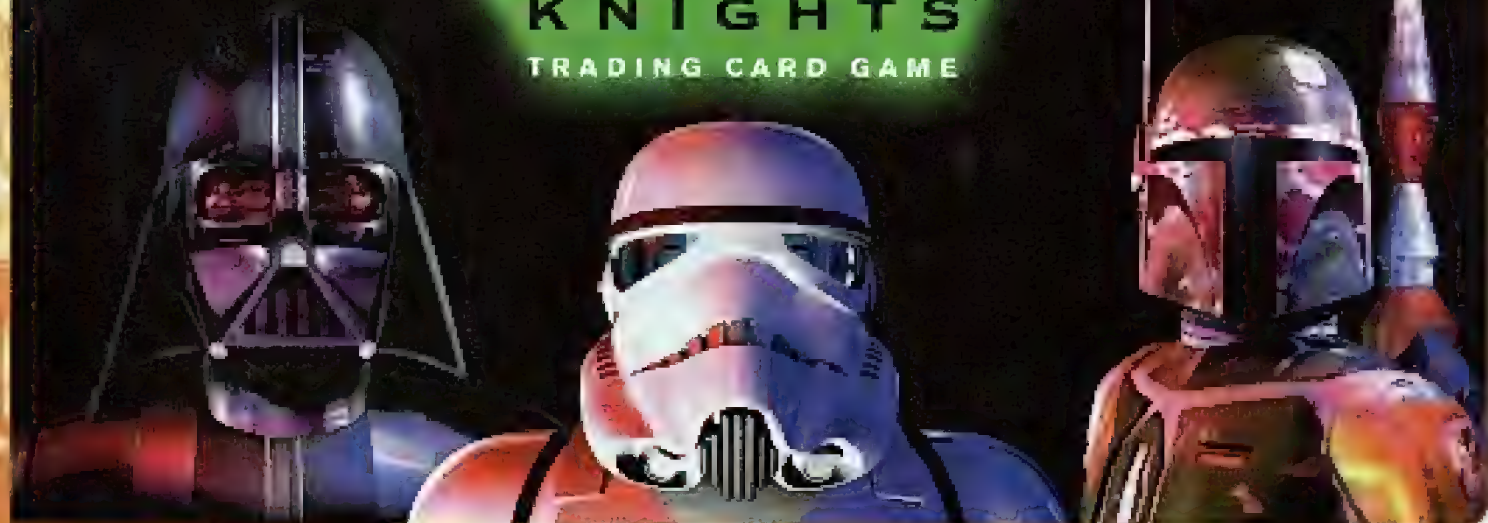
To order the *Star Wars* episode of *The Muppet Show*, call (800) 621-7020, or go to www.time-life.com, and request Tape 2 in the "Best of The Muppet Show" collection.

For more on the *Star Wars*-*Muppet* connection, see our interview with Frank Oz in *Insider* #42, and our exploration of *Star Wars* on television in *Insider* #32. Anthony Daniels talks more about the *Muppets* in his interview in *Insider* #46.

STAR WARS INSIDER

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TRADING CARD GAME



Jedi Knight Shift:

Decipher Unveils a New *Star Wars* Trading Card Game

INTERVIEW BY CORY J. HERNDON

As Decipher enters its sixth year making cards based on the *Star Wars* universe, the designers celebrate with the release of the *Jedi Knights* trading card game. This is the Virginia-based game company's third *Star Wars* card game after 1995's *Star Wars Customizable Card Game* and the *Young Jedi Collectible Card Game* released in 1999. The original game used digitally retouched photos from the original trilogy with complex game mechanics, and *Young Jedi* focused on The Phantom Menace and simpler, faster, easy-to-learn game play. The new *Jedi Knights* game offers both old and new at the same time: all-new 3D computer modeled images based on the classic trilogy, greater complexity than the *Young Jedi CCG*, and fast, interactive play.

Knight Moves:

An Interview with *Jedi Knights* Designer Tom Lischke Sure, it's almost summer for you, but as this piece is being written, it's still early January. G.W. has yet to enter the Oval Office, the Super Bowl hasn't happened yet, and information on the *Jedi Knights* TCG is mighty hard to come by. Weep for us, people of the future.

The Game in a Databurst

For the first time, Decipher offers a true multiplayer *Star Wars* card experience: *Jedi Knights* works equally well with either two or four players. However many participants, the game is over after 8 turns, during which players take turns with action in each phase (similar to the *Doontown* card game). Each turn, the forces of the Alliance combat the Empire for control of four planets in the *Star Wars* universe. Each player's deck is built around a Theme character such as Luke or Tarkin. (In a two-player game, decks built on two different heroes—for example, Luke and Han—fight against two different dark heroes, such as Vader or Tarkin.) If one side (that is, one player or team of players with the same allegiance) seizes three planets in a row, the game ends. If not, the game enters a cinematic Final Conflict sequence wherein combat continues until only one side remains. Since players are required to determine control of a planet every two turns, a game of *Jedi Knights* can go even more quickly than a round of the "simplified" *Young Jedi CCG*.

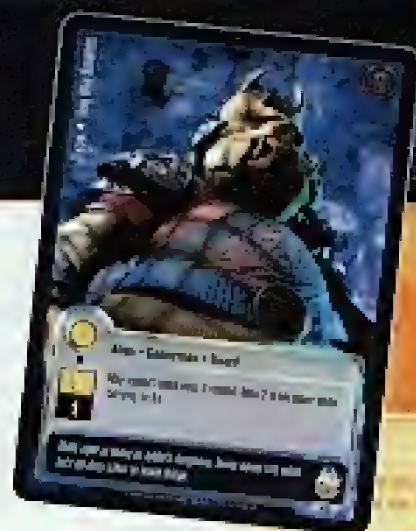


The Cardface Deciphered!



Character

Heroes are characters, but not all characters are heroes. Instead they support others with the leadership icon. Supporting a character doesn't add to his strength so much as serve as a shield—as long as a leader has a character supporting him, he cannot be targeted by a weapon.



This drought of information was ended by the good will of one Tom Lischke, designer extraordinaire for Decipher's card development team. Mr. Lischke goes into detail about the design process for Jedi Knights, gives us a few examples of game play in action, and tells us about the "go for it" feeling of the trading card game.

Please describe the Jedi Knights TCG in 28 words or less.

A TCG that revolves around the coolest characters and starships in the Star Wars universe, with a higher "film quotient" than past games.

23 words, not bad! So it appears the game is still divided into a light side and a dark side. Is that correct?

Sort of. Technically, it is the Alliance and the Empire, but in future sets it is pretty likely that we'll make it possible to play

as an Independent Hero as well (Jabba or Fett, most likely).

Which game does the JTKCG draw more from—Young Jedi, Star Wars CCG, both, neither?

Hmmm, if I was forced to say one or the other, I would have to go with Star Wars CCG, but it really is its own beast.

Has the "dot" system from Young Jedi been adopted for deck building? Is there a limit on deck size?

The deck building dots didn't really work for this system, so we went with a per-card limit of 5 instead.

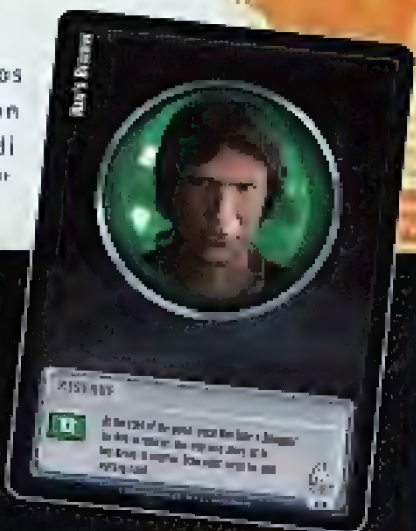
What's your favorite aspect of the game?

I like the multiplayer aspect. It gives a whole new dimension to deck building. Do you try to do balanced decks, or do you trust your teammate to cover your weaknesses? There are a couple of different ways to cut up a Jedi Knights deck (characters vs. starships, weapons vs. events, and so forth), so the decisions for team play will be as deep as the players want them to be.

Star Wars CCG has Force activation and Young Jedi has "evening up."

Theme

Each Jedi Knights deck has a Theme card that reflects the hero around whom your deck is built (whether characters are good or evil, they're still considered heroes). The first four Theme cards (included in the starter decks) are Han, Luke, Vader, and Tarkin.



Starship

Unlike the *Star Wars* CCG, *Starship and Character Battle* phases happen separately. *Starship battles* occur first. This occasionally allows characters to fight in a battle at a system, then move down to the surface and fight at a site on the same turn.



Does JK have one mechanic bring cards into play and drive the card-drawing engine?

Yep, the Force cards tie together initiative, card draw, and credits. In the *Premiere* set, the only Force cards will be from the Green set, which is fairly balanced between the initiative (Force) number, draw number, and credit number, but in the future you'll see other sets that are more extreme.

Could you give an example of combat?

Sure. Let's say that in a two-player game, Mary is playing a Luke theme and Bob is playing a Vader theme. At a typical site, you might see Luke, Obi-Wan (with his lightsaber), Wedge, and a couple of

Jawas on one side, while Vader might be at the planet with a couple of Stormtroopers with Blaster Rifles and Boba Fett.

Say that Bob, the Empire player, played the higher Force number this turn, and so gets to declare the first battle.

Boba Fett, power 6, decides to attack Obi-Wan, power 7, hoping to provide an opening for Vader to go after Luke later in the turn. The Alliance player decides to have a Jawa support. Ben and Bob has one of those armed Stormtroopers support Fett.

As the attacker, Fett gets the first action in the Weapons Step. The Blaster Rifle shot from the Stormtrooper supporting Fett takes out the Jawa. Mary uses Obi-Wan's Lightsaber to strike down the Stormtrooper. Bob then plays an Event under Fett that has a tactical bonus of 4, bringing Fett's power to 10. Not having any Events in hand to raise Obi-Wan's power, Mary uses the text on his lightsaber; she discards it to swing it a second time in battle. If the swing is successful, she'll eliminate the last opposing character in the battle, making her the winner of that battle. If she misses, Fett (the attacker) will end up with a higher power than Obi-Wan

(the defender) in the Power Step—making him the winner of the battle and causing Mary to discard Obi-Wan.

Once that battle is over, Mary would have to opportunity to declare an attack and so on, back and forth while there are still characters ready.

How are locations used?

In the opening of the game, players (or sides in a multiplayer game) alternate playing a site, and their opponents then play the system version of that planet next to it. There is a lot of risk and reward in playing the locations. If you include higher point value sites in your deck, you sacrifice good starting conditions at the planet in terms of the "home troops," the characters and starships that start in play at that planet.

I've heard a lot about how much more quickly the game plays than either *Star Trek* or *Star Wars*. How is this fast pace achieved?

First, the card interactions should be easier to understand, both card-to-card and card-to-rules mechanic. We had some hard and fast guidelines that we followed when developing card texts. The big thing, however, will be the fact that *Jedi Knights* has a constant "go for it" feeling. While you can spend time min/maxing your



Force

Each player chooses eight different Force cards to use in a single deck, and chooses which to play each turn. Force cards are the "coin" of the realm in several ways: They decide which player goes first, how many credits each can spend on deployment, and how many cards the player draws at the end of the turn.



Locations (Sites & Systems)

Locations are played at the start of the game, and the order in which they're laid down affects the "plot" of the game. Every two turns, one player either controls or loses that planet, and the battle moves on to the next location. The site is on one side of a card, the system is on the other.

decisions, most choices are in some way risky. Often, a good intuitive feel for the game serves you just as well. Because you have multiple chances to score rewards for the endgame, and the game contains a couple of built-in resets at the planet changes, the pace of the game can remain quick.

Is the new game less complicated than the *Star Wars* CCG? More complicated? Why?

It is a little clearer, if only because the movement system functions like a funnel in a couple of ways. Characters funnel from systems to sites, and cards in general funnel from one planet to the final battle. Overall, it has cleaner depth (less overhead to get to the same depth as *Star Wars* CCG), but the depth isn't that far removed from *Star Wars* CCG. Players just get there by a friendlier path. More time spent enjoying game play decisions rather than finding mechanical descriptions.



Event

Each event card has two uses; its game text can have sudden and surprising effects on the course of the game, or its tactical bonus can be used to add to a leader's power in a battle. Only one event card can be played by each player per battle.

This is the third card game Decipher has created under the *Star Wars* license. What drove the decision to design a whole new game?

We have a tremendous opportunity to combine cutting edge art with six years of experience designing in the *Star Wars* universe. There have been a lot of lessons learned over that time period, and we think that it is going to allow us to produce a premium product for *Star Wars* fans.

What elements will be familiar to experienced players?

That is tough. While things may look the same as older mechanics on the surface, not much is a straight pull from the older games. *Destiny* draws and weapon functions [are similar]. The stats on the characters—like power, defense, and a cost—[will also be familiar]. There are only so many ways to describe a *Star Wars* character, after all.

How has the game been structured to allow beginners to jump right in?

The starter decks are great. They are preconstructed, but they give you all of the key cards needed to play, as well as a pretty good version of two of the heroes. The text on the heroes makes sure that they can be in play every turn (even if they get bumped off, they can come back quickly). This is done to make sure that *Star Wars* fans get to play with *Star Wars* characters. And, after taking feedback from our other games about the characters that have come in starter decks, we made sure that the heroes in these decks are pretty strong.

Also, the starters come with a play mat that has a "walkthrough." The biggest help for the new player is the

Weapon

Most weapons deploy for free and can be used to destroy an opposing character or starship in battle. Weapons deploy under a character or starship.



cleanliness of the system. We've gone out of our way to assure two things: The game system has depth, and the game system is understandable.

In a game called "*Jedi Knights*," it seems odd to focus on the Rebellion era. Are there plans to expand this game into the time period of the Old Republic?

Who knows where this game will go in the future? For now, our [computer] models are focused on the classic time period, so I think we are going to stick with that for a while. ☺



TOP 10 REASONS TO TRY THE TALES

BY LEE DAWSON

WARNING! SPOILERS ABOUND! READ AT YOUR OWN PERIL!



PRESERVING CONTINUITY IN THE STAR WARS UNIVERSE is like putting together a puzzle with thousands of pieces, only these elements are not packaged neatly in a box. They're embedded in 25 years' worth of *Star Wars* films, novels, games, and comics. Continuity lends realism to the *Star Wars* galaxy, its history, and its mythology. Without it, we wouldn't know that Boba Fett wears Mandalorian armor. We wouldn't know that the spider robot thing from *Return of the Jedi* was called a B'Omarr monk.

Star Wars Tales is a comic that takes continuity and tosses it out the window. Sometimes all that wonderful mythology and history can get in the way of great storytelling. Questions such as, "Would a character really do that?" or, "Where does this fit in?" can lead to artists, writers, and editors throwing up their hands and fleeing to the Outer Rim. Ahh, but what if we didn't have to worry about such constraints? Imagine Yoda in three different stories wielding three different colored lightsabers. Sacrilege? I say not. Let the continuity crumble away and the wonder of endless possibilities begin.

Here, then, are the Top 10 Reasons why you should be reading *Star Wars Tales*:

1 STAR WARS TALES #1

Picking up the first installment, it's clear you're about to uncover something unique. This first issue sets the tone for the entire line of comics with Ron Marz, Peter David, Timothy Zahn and Jim Woodring all writing for the same title. Each writer adds his own unique spin to a particular part of the *Star Wars* universe, telling great stories without a care as to how they might fit in to the big picture. Stories range from Ron Marz's haunting "Extinction" featuring Darth Vader hunting down the Dark Woman, to the hilarious "Sippy the Jedi Droid" by Peter David showing the true power of RS-D4. Classic stuff and a great kickoff to the line.

2 THE COVER OF TALES #6

When I first saw this cover, all I could think was "I can't wait to read that story!" Now that's a cover. The bittersweet image of Darth Vader holding the disembodied head of

C-3PO not only echoes *Hamlet* but gives pause. Many fans wonder why Darth Vader never acknowledged C-3PO as his childhood playmate in any of the *Star Wars* films. The story, by Ryder Windham, seeks to answer that question. Set on Cloud City right after C-3PO is blown to bits, a series of haunting flashbacks explores what Vader might have been thinking when first confronted with his old friend's various parts. For cynics out there who, when watching *The Empire Strikes Back*, cry out, "Now why would they give Han, Chewbacca, and Leia their droid back?" the answer lies here.

3 BOBA FETT IN LOVE

In *Star Wars Tales* #7, Beau Smith's "Outbid But Never Outgunned" is a touching story about Boba Fett's ex-love and ... well, I can't reveal more than that. One must be cautious when talking about the most notorious bounty hunter in the galaxy. This is a tale of someone who has secret information

about Boba Fett's past, and Fett will stop at nothing to keep the secret from getting out. Let's just say the final panel is a jaw dropper. Is it? Did he? Is she? Read it and be the judge.

4

KEVIN RUBIO

Rubio created a short film called *Troops*, a must-see parody of the TV show *Cops* featuring stormtroopers instead of policemen.



detail from "Force Fiction" *Star Wars Tales* #7


detail of an illustration by Kevin Rubio and Michele Medden

Rubio's work on *Star Wars Tales* is just as inventive and hilarious. In *Star Wars Tales* #4, "A Death Star Is Born" features a meeting between Grand Moff Tarkin, Darth Vader, and the Emperor discussing matters of utmost importance. Intergalactic annihilation? Nope. Controlling the masses? Nope. How about naming the Death Star? It turns out the Emperor isn't too keen on some of the suggestions he's received, like "Sun Blocker" and "Titanic." Fans of the film *Pulp Fiction* will appreciate Rubio's story in *Star Wars Tales* #7, "Force Fiction," a parody of the final restaurant scene in the movie featuring Yoda and Mace Windu. Once you've seen Yoda in a booster chair, you will never look at the Jedi Master the same way again.

THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION IS THE FIRST, IN ORDER, NO ONE'S GOING TO STOP ME!

De-|f-i-n-i-t-i-o-n

unlikely here, because the Government is taking no



NO LONGER A GUARD,
GRISON FOUND HIMSELF
KICKED FROM PLANET TO
PLANET, LABORING AT ONE
GRUELING JOB AFTER
ANOTHER.

(continued)

to Scott Morse (*Tales* #6). You won't see more contrasting styles, but both work wonderfully in the context of their stories. The trend continues in other issues. Craig Thompson, Carlos Megilla and Tony Millionaire are side-by-side in *Tales* #5. Dave Cooper comes right after Claudio Castellini in *Tales* #2. The list is vast, but one thing is consistent: The editors of *Star Wars Tales* are not afraid to use non-traditional *Star Wars* artists in the same book. The result is a page-by-page art lesson showing countless ways to portray your favorite characters.

8 YODA WIELDING A LIGHTSABER

Sound like a set-up for a laugh track? Although the *Tales* feature many parodies, some stories play it straight and stay that way. They don't trick the reader midway through and change gears. *Star Wars Tales* #6 features one of my favorite stories, "The Hidden" (by Sean Konot and Scott Morse), in which Yoda uses the Jedi's most sacred weapon in a probable scenario featuring a Probot. It is a good example of showing some feat not previously performed by a character while still keeping the character's actions realistic and believable.

CHARACTER COVERAGE

Your favorite character is here, no matter who or what they are. Like Greedo? "The Hovel on Turk Street" in *Tales #6* features a great Greedo story reminiscent of classic film noir. Like Mara Jade? Try *Tales #1*. Queen

10 This really sums up the beauty of *Star Wars Tales*. This type of "impossible" story is why these books are so much fun. The title alone should cause *Star Wars* fans everywhere to cry out, "How cool!" and with reason. You won't find a more ultimate showdown in the *Star Wars* galaxy, and only in a non-continuity type of book like *Tales* can such stories exist. Fans can take this out of the "Wouldn't it be really neat if . . . ?" file and put it in their hands for reading and later debate. What other ultimate team-ups or battles might *Tales* have in store? The possibilities are endless, and I can't wait to see what's next. 🍌

SERVING DARTH SIDIOUS

BY JASON FRY

AUTHOR JAMES LUCENO DELVES INTO DARK MINDS

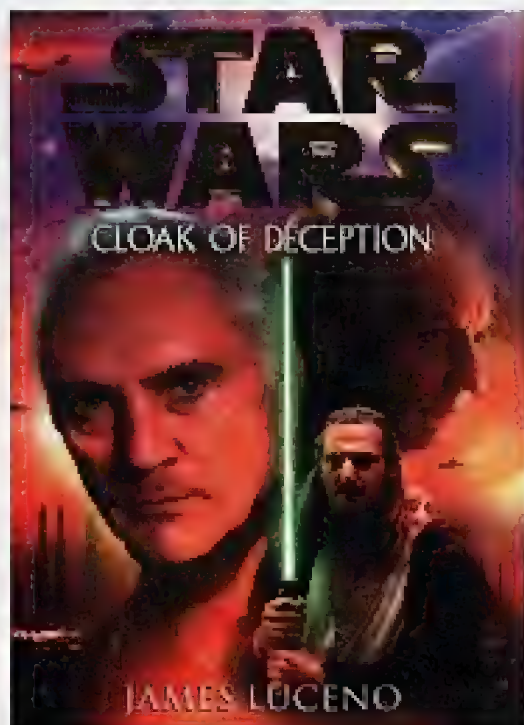
James Luceno may be a new name on the roster of *Star Wars* authors, but he served his apprenticeship in that universe nearly 25 years ago, acting as a sounding board and brainstorming partner for his good friend Brian Daley as Daley worked on *Han Solo at Stars' End*, *Han Solo's Revenge* and *Han Solo and the Lost Legacy*—a trilogy that stands as one of *Star Wars* fans' favorites.



Given that background, it was only fitting that Luceno's *Star Wars* debut—last summer's *Star Wars: Agents of Chaos: Book I—Hera's Trial* (Del Rey, \$6.99)—would star none other than Han Solo. But this Han was a Corellian of a rather different stripe than the young rogue of the Daley books. Luceno's Han was more than a quarter-century older, a battle-scarred war hero who'd become a husband and a father and seen his best friend slain in the fight against the Yuuzhan Vong.

"I was challenged to show him not only older but in a situation in which he's somewhat grief-stricken and isolated from Leia and his family," Luceno says.

If Han was different, so was the saga: In the 21 years since the release of Daley's final Han Solo volume, the *Star Wars* universe has grown immensely, embracing not only two more movies but also hundreds of novels, comic books and roleplaying game books. And with the release of Episode I, authors like Luceno



have a whole new era in which to play.

Luceno's latest *Star Wars* novel, *Cloak of Deception* (Del Rey, \$26), is set before Han Solo was even born, about a year before *The Phantom Menace*. *Cloak of Deception* finds Supreme Chancellor Valorum battling allegations of corruption—and threats on his life—engineered by the scheming Senator Palpatine, while Qui-Gon Jinn and his Padawan Obi-Wan Kenobi struggle to untangle a sinister plan reaching throughout the Republic.

For Luceno, the seeds of *Cloak of Deception* were planted in the first minute of *The*

Phantom Menace, as the crawl that opened the movie told the audience of the Trade Federation's machinations, Valorum's trouble with the Senate and Jedi Knights dispatched on a secret mission. "I thought, 'Wow, there is a fantastic backstory there—I hope somebody will write a prequel novel.'"

That somebody would turn out to be Luceno. In writing his story, he got to flesh out Valorum from the character who makes a brief appearance in *The Phantom Menace* and delve into Palpatine's thoughts—though *Star Wars* fans won't be surprised to hear that not all of that dark mind's secrets will be revealed. He was also pleased to get the chance to tell a story starring Qui-Gon, a character who intrigued him and whom he was sad to see meet an untimely end in *The Phantom Menace*.

"I enjoyed being able to tie into events that are really a part of the cinematic history" of *Star Wars*, Luceno says, adding that he tried to give *Cloak* "the feel of a novelization, almost as if the movie had been made." (Luceno knows that feeling—he's written several novelizations, including *The Shadow* and *The Mask of Zorro*.)

The pre-*Phantom Menace* era wasn't wholly uncharted ground for Luceno, though—in February he became the first *Star Wars* author to have a book released in wholly electronic form, penning the e-book *Darth Maul: Saboteur* (Del Rey, \$1.99), which fans can download from online booksellers such as Amazon.com and Barnesandnoble.com.

Saboteur takes *Darth Sidious'* apprentice to the mining colony of Dorvala, where he plays two rival mining companies against

"TRAVEL IS WHAT GOT ME WRITING. I DIDN'T GROW UP WANTING TO BE A WRITER—IN FACT, I FAILED ENGLISH IN HIGH SCHOOL."

—JAMES LUCENO

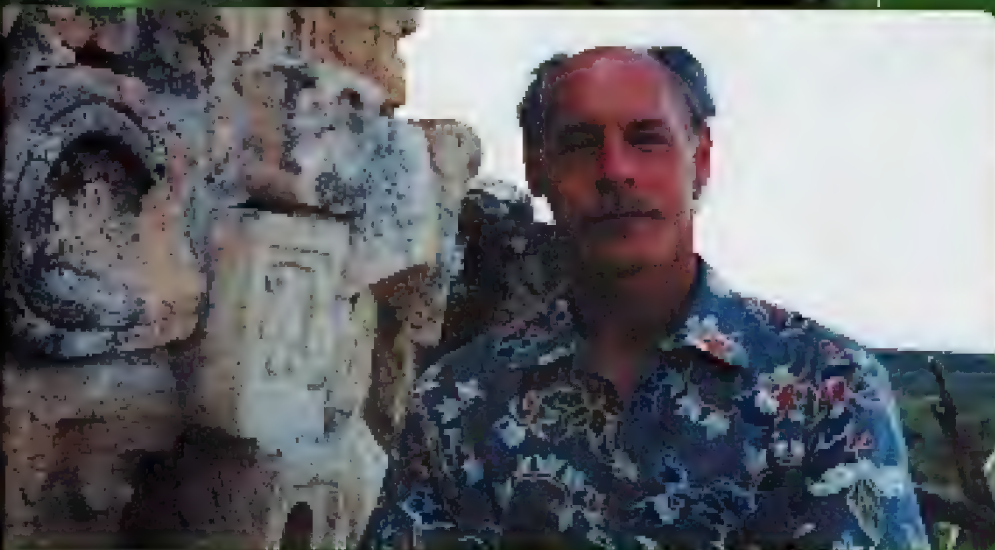


photo courtesy of James Luceno

each other in a complex dejavú game designed to deliver an entire system into the hands of the Trade Federation—and the grasp of Darth Sidious. In *Saboteur*, fans used to seeing Maul as a cold-blooded killer get to see him as a trickster and puppeteer, dispatching his master's enemies with cunning rather than a lightsaber blade (though there's some of that too, of course).

One of the toughest parts of *Saboteur*, Luceno says, was trying to get inside Maul's head. With the Sith warrior's background so mysterious, Luceno studied *Return of the Jedi* and the relationship between Darth Vader and the Emperor for inspiration. In the end, he says, "I just portrayed [Maul] completely introspectively—I was trying to imagine what it's like serving someone like Sidious."

Writing Han Solo didn't require such an introspective approach—Luceno had an avalanche of established stories to work with. In *Hero's Trial* and its sequel, *Jedi Eclipse* (Del Rey, \$6.99), Han runs across a number of characters first encountered in Daley's books. There's the former smuggler Roa, the crime lord Big Burfi and even a devious labor droid who may or may not be the venerable Bollux. *Hero's Trial* feels, as Luceno puts it, like a "Han Solo, this is your life" novel.

It also feels like a salute to Daley, who died in February 1996. That was exactly what Luceno

had in mind. He and Daley were not only good friends but also longtime writing partners: They wrote more than two dozen books together under the pen name Jack McKinney, most of them set in the *Saboteur* universe. In writing about Han Solo, a character Daley probably captured better than almost any other *Star Wars* writer except George Lucas himself, Luceno was able to offer his friend a salute.

"I really felt like Brian was sitting on my shoulder and helping me along there," he says, adding that "Brian was in many ways a mentor for me...I was really glad for the opportunity to pay him a tribute like that."

Han Solo ranges the galaxy in the *Agents of Chaos* duology, and while Luceno's not that well traveled, he's hardly a stay-at-home writer. He traveled the world in his twenties, and has a decades-long fascination with "everything about Latin America, from the landscape to the political situation to the indigenous cultures." (Fans can see the influence in his books, from the young-adult-oriented *Rio Pasión* to his award-winning *Fearful Symmetry* to the Yuuzhan Vong, whose notions of bloodletting and pain as religious expressions have their roots in Aztec practices.)

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"Travel is what got me writing," Luceno says. "I didn't grow up wanting to be a writer—in fact, I failed English in high school. But when I started traveling, I found I was just so overwhelmed by all my experiences that I started to keep journals."

With one of his current projects, Luceno has come full circle: He's working on a memoir of his experiences in Mexico and Guatemala, including a trip he made to scatter some of Daley's ashes at a remote site in Guatemala that the two friends had planned to visit. The memoir is his first formal stab at non-fiction, and judging from Luceno's comments, it's not likely to be his last.

"I would love to be able to switch over" between non-fiction and fiction, he says: "It's not that I feel non-fiction has more relevance or anything, but I feel there are a lot of interesting things in the real world that I'd like to write about." ☺

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES

DELVE INTO *THE DARK SIDE SOURCEBOOK*

BY JESSE DECKER

Ever since Darth Vader strode into the corridor of the Rebel blockade-runner in *A New Hope*, fans of the *Star Wars* universe have wondered about the dark side of the Force.

Jedi are warned against its allure; heroes rise against it in every era; and yet, despite these powerful influences arrayed against it, the dark side survives, hides, and returns with renewed strength to threaten order in the galaxy. The new *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* from Wizards of the Coast is about to endure a powerful new influence—the lure of the dark side. *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, written by Bill Slavicek, JD Wiker, and Cory Herndon, arrives in hobby and game stores soon. The new book contains detailed notes on the characters, equipment, and history of the dark side of the Force.

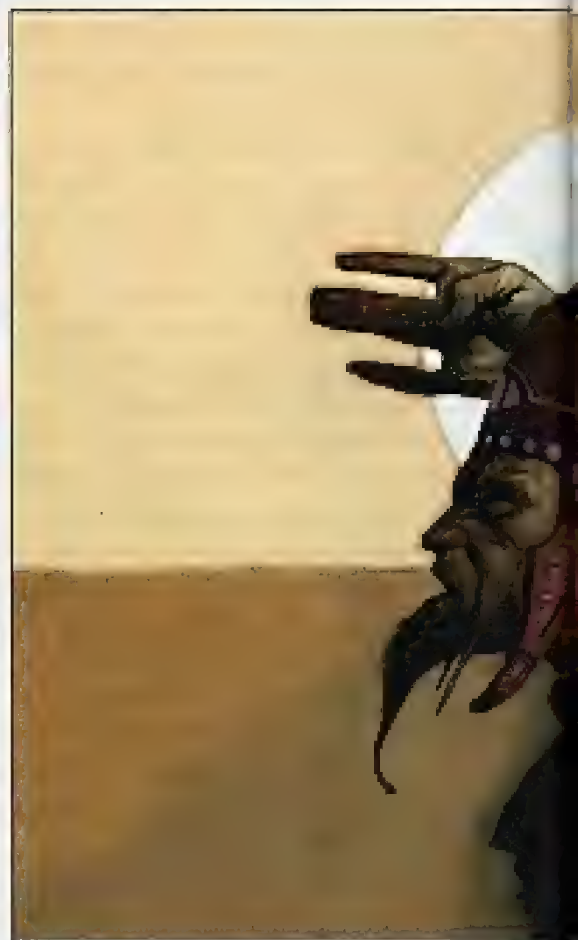
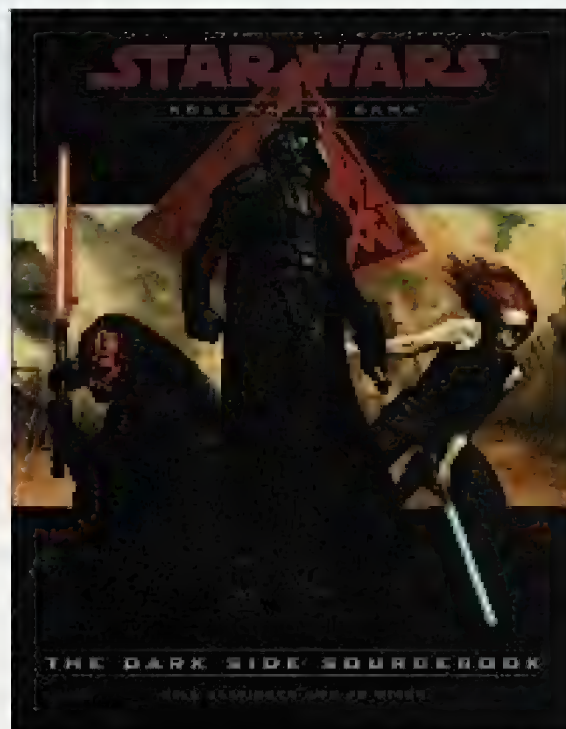
Star Wars fans can once again feel the allure of the dark side. From Vader's dramatic first appearance to the climatic battle of *The Phantom Menace*, the dark side is cloaked in an aura of fear and mystery. The expanded universe, while illuminating many of the questions surrounding the dark side, has raised many more. *The Dark Side Sourcebook* answers many questions, allowing players of the *Star Wars RPG* a chance to add ancient Sith technology to their games, fight powerful dark side villains, and add a touch of the dark side to their own roleplaying experience.

As compelling as the descriptions of dark side history and existing dark side villains are, every *Star Wars RPG* player wants to know how to use the dark side in the game. The second chapter of the book is packed with new rules for dark side characters, including three new skills, five new Force skills, seven dark side feats, and eight new prestige classes. The skills and feats do a

great job of bringing the feel of the dark side into the game, and one new skill in particular will change the way players approach encounters with dark side villains. The prestige classes are probably the single most exciting part of the book—from the Emperor's Hand to the dreaded Sith Lord, the dark side prestige classes give rules for bring-

ing the most famous and feared servants of the dark into your campaign.

In the *Star Wars* movies, the dark side is a powerful influence, with the ability to shape history. It's no less powerful within the confines of a roleplaying game, and the contents of *The Dark Side Sourcebook* can certainly alter a campaign. Chapter three, one of the most useful sections of the book, is packed with advice on incorporating the dark side into a *Star Wars* campaign. Ultimately, the Gamemaster is in control of his or her own



"THERE'S NOTHING LIKE GETTING NEW TOYS TO PLAY WITH, AND *THE DARK SIDE SOURCEBOOK* DELIVERS."

campaign, but clear rules on the long-term effects of using the dark side, on Force Points and Dark Side Points, careful examination of the consequences of allowing one hero in a group to slip toward the dark side, and an excellent discussion on the difficulties involved in running a dark side campaign give Gamemasters a solid foundation of knowledge on which to build the role of the dark side in their campaign.

There's nothing like getting new toys to play with, and *The Dark Side Sourcebook* delivers. Although Sith artifacts and equipment comprise the bulk of the items described, the technology is so unlike other equipment in the game that it warrants the space in the book.

THE DARK SIDE SOURCEBOOK

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SUMMARY



Chapter One: THE DARK SIDE

Chapter one tells the history of the dark side, beginning 25,000 years before the Battle of Yavin and ending four years after that famous conflict.



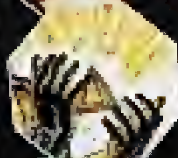
Chapter Two: PLAYING THE DARK SIDE

Chapter two details dark side character templates, skills, feats, and prestige classes. This chapter also includes many notes useful for players and Gamemasters playing characters influenced by the dark side.



Chapter Three: GAMEMASTERING THE DARK SIDE

Chapter three describes the rules and techniques useful when pitting light side heroes against dark side adversaries or creating an entire dark side campaign.



Chapter Four: DARK SIDE EQUIPMENT

From the fearsome Sith lance to the dark armor worn by the foot of the Jedi, the equipment of the mightiest dark forces ever assembled is detailed.



Chapter Five: DARK SIDE TRADITIONS

Chapter five details dark side personalities from every era of the Star Wars saga. This chapter, one of the longest in the book, includes ancient Sith Lords like Naga Sadow, more recent menaces like Darth Maul, and infamous groups of dark siders like the Sorcerers of Tund.



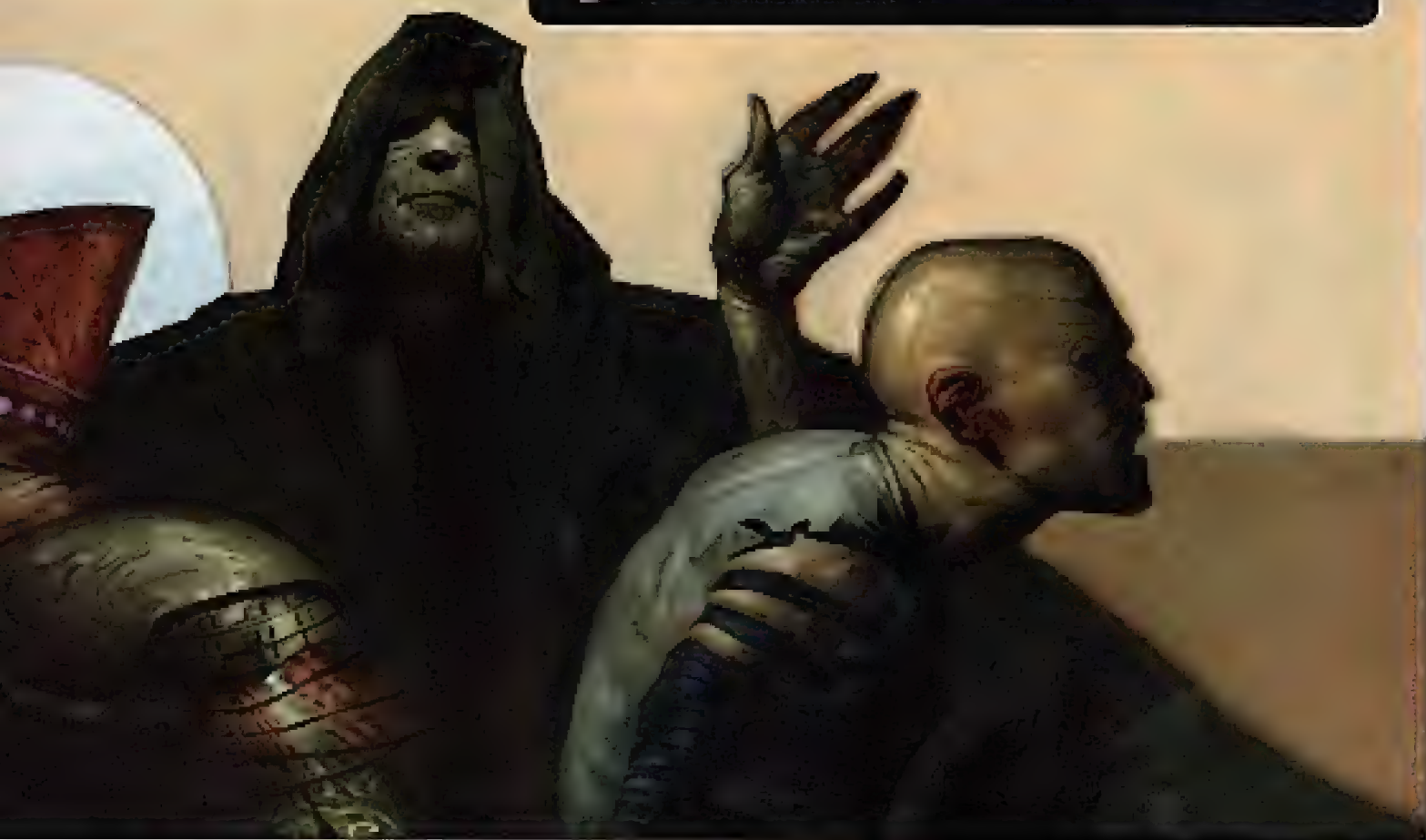
Chapter Six: CREATURES & ARCHETYPES

Chapter six provides Gamemasters with Sith-altered beasts, statistics for generic dark sider encounters, and other creatures to challenge the heroes.



Chapter Seven: THE DARK SIDE CAMPAIGN

Chapter seven is full of practical advice about the role of the dark side in different eras of play, along with descriptions of famous dark side sites and how to use them in a campaign.




No discussion of the dark side would be complete without describing the major dark side villains. Some of the characters from the *Star Wars* RPG are reprised, incorporating the new dark side abilities, but most of the space is devoted to describing famous characters from the *Star Wars* universe that haven't appeared in the roleplaying game until now. From the lords of the Sith empire to the most dangerous Jedi hunters in the expanded universe, the most famous followers of the dark side are ready to be used in the RPG.

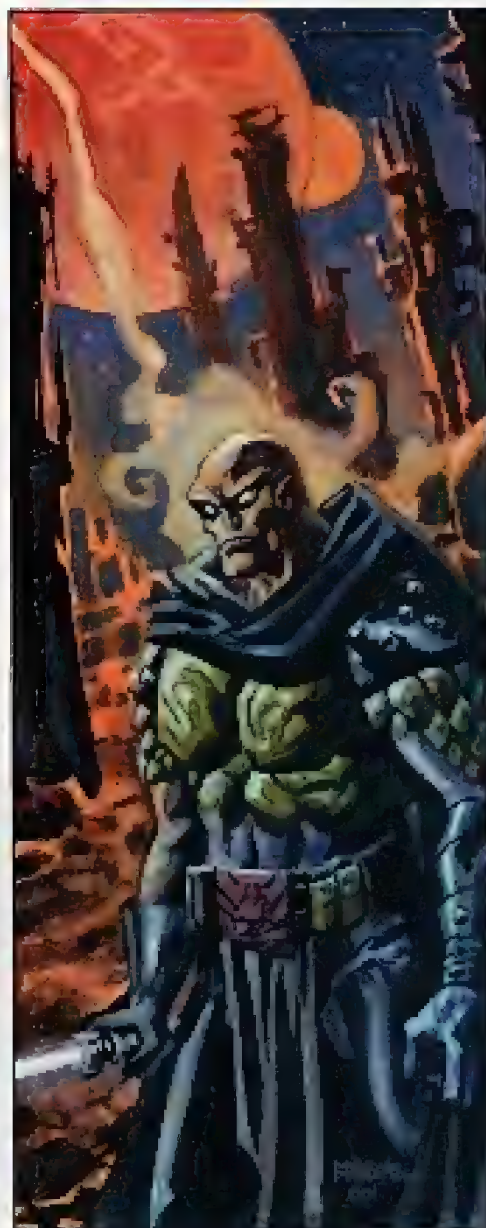
Sith Lords, although fearsome, are few and far between. More common by far are the creatures created by Sith alchemy, like Sith mutants, Massassi warriors, and the war droids of the Sith empire. The book also describes dark side spirits and provides generic, ready-to-play villains like Dark Jedi, Imperial Inquisitors, and the Nightsisters of Dathomir.

Rather than include a lengthy adventure, *The Dark Side Sourcebook* describes several famous dark side sites like the cave on

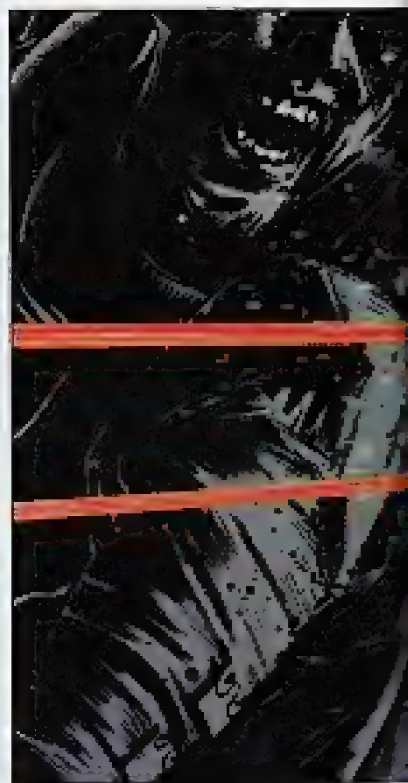
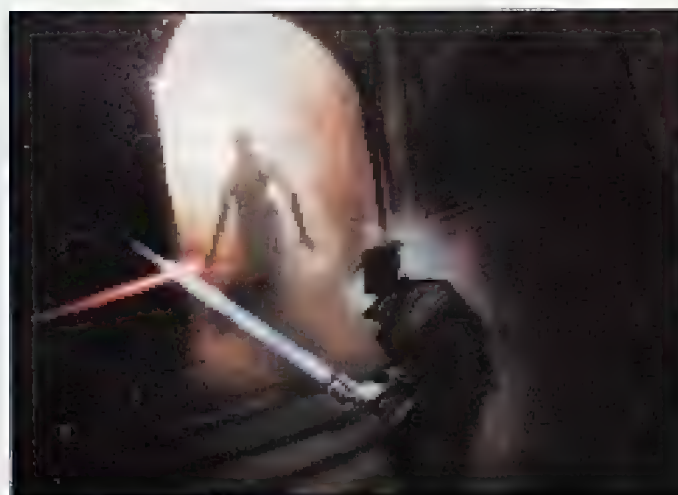
Dagobah and discusses a new era of play—the Sith empire. Sith empire campaigns can take place within the boundaries of the Sith empire, within the growing republic, or in the unexplored areas between the two powers.

Even if you're not a fan of the *Star Wars* RPG, *The Dark Side Sourcebook* answers questions about the mysterious dark side. For more information on *The Dark Side Sourcebook* take a look at www.wizards.com. 

A SAMPLING FROM THE DARK SIDE ONLINE ART GALLERY: WWW.WIZARDS.COM/INSIDER



Don Brearton's rendition of Darth Vader brings to mind the covers of pulp magazines with its deep colors and suitably vile looking central character, while Ashley Wood's fog-like illustration of dark side spirits echoes their insubstantial bodies, just as his dueling Jedi conjure up images of forgotten temples and unopened tombs. Tommy Lee Edwards takes a turn at everyone's favorite bounty hunter taking down yet another unfortunate Jedi.





D. Alexander Gregory took another turn creating iconic characters for *The Dark Side Sourcebook's* prestige class section. These illustrations represent a variety of evil-doers, from the Imperial Inquisitor to the Sith cultist to the red-cloaked Sith witch. Doug managed to infuse a compelling personality into each of his illustrations. Below is his rendition of darksider Gethzeron.



SURFING WITH STARWARS.COM

BY PAUL ENS

SEARCHING FOR (LOST) TREASURES ON THE INTERNET

You're a *Star Wars* fan, so you know what's at the official *Star Wars* site, right? You eagerly awaited George Lucas Selects each week. You dig Classic Moments and you're waiting for Robin Gurland to answer your Ask the Lucasfilm Jedi Council questions. You even recognize the phrase "All I Need is an Idea."

Maybe so, but with over 4,000 pages built up over nearly five years, there's probably some hidden treasure you haven't uncovered. If you're up for some internet sight-seeing, here's a sampling of some of the best *starwars.com* content you've never seen... or that's at least worth another look.



HOMING BEACON ARCHIVE

<http://www.starwars.com/site/homingbeacon>

Since January 2000, *starwars.com*'s free biweekly email newsletter has not only kept fans in-the-loop on the site's most recent happenings, but every issue has contained original exclusive content.

Over its life, the Homing Beacon has brought readers George Lucas' plans beyond Episode III, behind-the-scenes photos of Hayden Christensen's screen test, first-time Episode II casting announcements, and many conversations with Episode II personalities like Beacon regular Rick McCallum (Producer), Ben Burtt (Editor), Lynne Hale (Publicity), Nick Gillard (Stunt Coordinator), David Dazoretz (Animatics), and Anthony Daniels (C-3PO).

When *starwars.com* launched its new design in spring, an archive of the entire set of newsletters was quietly added. This is your chance to catch any gems you missed.

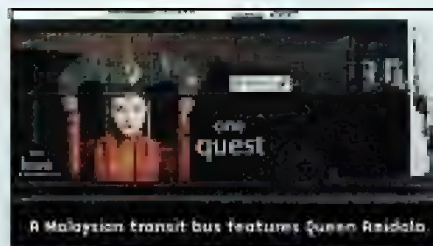
A GIFT TO SOOTHE THE SAVAGE BEAST

<http://www.starwars.com/site/news/2000/12/news20001224.html>

As the official site took a brief hiatus at the end of 2000, visitors were greeted with a heartwarming tale of mystery, suspense, horror, and holiday warmth as Artoo-Oetoo entered where few dare to tread... the Wampa caves of Hoth. The Flash-based short was written and animated by well-known *Star Wars* fan and online humorist, Robert McNeill (aka Ed Bain). The piece ran initially for a limited seven-day run, but due to popular demand has since been added to the *starwars.com* archives for repeat enjoyment.



Not since Bing Crosby and David Bowie has there been such an unlikely holiday pairing.



THE ONE ABROAD

<http://www.starwars.com/episode-i/feature/20000601>

Star Wars may be a part of North American culture, but the challenges of making Episode I relevant to international audiences produced beautiful designs rarely seen on domestic soil. See how the power of "one" translated to the walls, buses and consciousness of countries like Germany, Malaysia, Latvia, Thailand, Korea, and France. This powerful visual campaign helped *The Phantom Menace* earn more at the box-office internationally than domestically, a first for a *Star Wars* film.

MAKING OF EPISODE I FEATURETTES

<http://www.starwars.com/episode-i/video/epifeaturette/epifeaturettes.html>

As fans hungered for details about Episode I, the "Lynne's Diaries" web documentary series grew to the status of legend among the online community. However, nearly a year after the film's theatrical debut, a second "making of" short documentary series was produced to help support *The Phantom Menace*'s video release.

These four featurettes were not hindered by the need to withhold surprises from the fans, and could go into full detail behind the

"BACK IN 1996 VIDEO ON THE WEB WAS IN ITS INFANCY, BUT LUCASFILM WAS CONVINCED THAT THIS NEW MEDIUM WOULD BECOME A POWERFUL WAY TO LET ITS DEDICATED FANS INSIDE THE FILM-MAKING PROCESS IN A TIMELY WAY NEVER BEFORE POSSIBLE."

PODRACING
TALES

creation of a digital Watto, the technical secrets of the Podrace, the addition of sound to the film and an exploration into the layer after layer of depth to discover in the visuals... including some famous Easter eggs.

ANATOMY OF A DEWBACK

<http://www.starwars.com/episode-1/video/dewback/dewback1.html>

This is the content that started it all

Back in 1996, video on the web was in its infancy, but Lucasfilm was convinced that this new medium would become a powerful way to let its dedicated fans inside the film-making process in a timely way never before possible. The series makes you a fly-on-the-wall as digital pioneers attempt to seamlessly marry a beloved film circa 1977 with the latest in digital technology.

If you weren't online when **starwars.com** launched, or if your 14.4 modem just wasn't up to the task of streaming video, this retrospective will let you see just how far digital filmmaking has come in 5 short years.

This grandfather to the Making of Episode II, on location and Lynne's Diary series was recently updated to a modern QuickTime format for enhanced viewing.



what is the fastest cut of deadback?



See the Podress from a new perspective.

PODRACING TALES

<http://www.starware.com/ou/feature/30001318>

This 48-page comic explores the seedy activities of the competitive racers in the days before the fateful Boonta Eve Podrace. Written by Ryder Windham and illustrated by Ken Steacy, this series was originally commissioned for inclusion with another Episode I licensed product. But when plans fell through, everyone involved was excited to give the story a home online.

While a young Anakin Skywalker was meeting his destiny, the previously untold tales of sabotage, trash talkin', personal vendettas, high-stakes wagering

and rock and roll were burgeoning all around him. You'll never view the Podrace the same way again.

URBAN LEGENDS OF STAR WARS

<http://www.starware.com/ep-code-iv/feature/80000530>

Few films are so discussed on playgrounds, in college dormrooms, in noisy cantinas and by workplace watercoolers as *Star Wars*. But can you believe everything your *Star Wars*-know-it-all buddies are selling? This feature gives definitive answers to some commonly told yarns: alleged footage of Lando's death, an early published version of Lucas' entire saga, Mark Hamill's *A New Hope* blooper, and the public release of rocket-firing Boba Fett, Bloop on Tatooine footage and

STAR WARS
CELEBRATION 1999

<http://www.storware.com/community/feature/19990410>

As you gear up for Celebration 2002, this feature on the first *Star Wars* Celebration should stir up nostalgia or make you book your Indianapolis hotel rooms early. **starwars.com** was at the May 1999 event as anticipation of Episode I was on everyone's mind. Along with interviews and event coverage, you can listen to the speeches of special guests Costume Designer Trish Biggar, Concept Artists Iain McCaig, Doug Chiang and Terry Whitlatch and actors Hugh Quarshie and Warwick Davis. 🌌

Paul Ems is webmaster of starwars.com

HOTH ECHO BASE MAIN HANGAR

BY CHRIS REEF
& CHRIS TREVAS

A PLACE TO PARK YOUR
23-TON "BUCKET OF BOLTS"

On Tuesday, May 22, 1979, filming began on a brand new soundstage at EMI-Elstree Studios after seven months of preparation. The new facility was built especially for the production of *The Empire Strikes Back*. The first set to be shot on the massive soundstage was the Rebel hangar on the ice planet Hoth.

Various techniques were used to achieve the frozen look of Echo Base. Sheets of polystyrene plastic shaped with hot-wire cutters lined the walls to create the look of a chamber carved from ice with laser beams. Conduits throughout the Rebel base were treated with cold kerosene and then sprayed with hot wax that would solidify to give the appearance of ice buildup. Shimmering stalactites and stalagmites were created from fabric and plaster sprayed with paint and lacquer.

A full-size model of the Millennium Falcon was the centerpiece of this awesome set. The same contracting company that constructed the new stage built the massive ship offsite at Pembroke Docks in a hangar where flying boats were once made in the 1930's. The frame was made from welded steel girders with a wooden superstructure built on top. It was transported to Elstree in sixteen interlocking sections by a convoy of trucks and then bolted back together. Once completed, the main body was 16 feet high and 65 feet in diameter. Including the forward mandibles, it had an overall length of 80 feet and weighed 23 tons. On set, it was floated into position by compressed air pads like those on hovercraft, lifting the ship a sixteenth of an inch off the ground—the closest the massive ship ever got to flight.

X-wing fighters and snowspeeders housed in the hangar were equally earthbound. Ogle Design Ltd., a sports car manufacturer near London, constructed the full-size Rebel snowspeeders. For their simulated takeoff into battle, the ships were raised by forklift.

Just as the Rebels had to abandon Hoth, the newest and largest soundstage at Elstree Studios had to be cleared for the next set. The icy cavern would be replaced by the swamps of Dagobah. ☹



This pilot's helmet was first worn by Gold Leader's lost wingman, Tires, during the battle of Yavin.



Rebel pilot helmets were modified versions of the U. S. Navy RPH-68 flight helmet.

"Do you know why I had Chewbacca work with a welding torch on the Falcon? That was the only thing I could find where you could see what he was doing. If he was screwing something with a tool, you wouldn't see anything. So whenever anything needs fixing, you'll notice the characters are welding!"

—Director James Cameron

Astromech droid R2-D2 was first seen in *A New Hope* aboard the Rebel Blockade Runner Tantive IV.

With the 28-foot ceiling of the hangar, Rebel needed a hydraulic lift to change lightbulbs.

Rebel snow was shared with Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*, which was also filming at Elstree Studios.

Prepared to hit the trenches or the slopes, Rebel soldiers on both wore ski goggles.

Vacuum-formed duckboards along the ground are similar to the covering used on airfields and muddy areas during World War II.

Both Rebel troops carry blasters made from modified World War II German MP44 assault rifles.

BOOTLEGGERS' REVENGE? ARTISTIC HOMAGE

ONE IMAGE PROVOKES THREE LETTERS;
PLAYSETS, AND WALLPAPER ALSO ON YOUR MIND

BY STEVE SANSWEET

It's not the quantity, but the quality that counts. It's true in life and it was true at the Hasbro showroom at this year's Toy Fair in New York, where a transitional line of *Star Wars* saga toys were shown that encompass all four existing movies.

There were cool new action figures and some great 12-inch figures that will make even the pickiest fan happy over the next 12 months.

But the excitement really peaked—and everyone's curiosity was piqued—with the revelation of a shelf full of amazingly detailed gray-colored resin busts of characters from Episode II. These were incredibly lifelike small-scale replicas of actors Hayden Christensen, Natalie Portman, Ewan McGregor, Christopher Lee, Samuel L. Jackson, and Temuera Morrison.

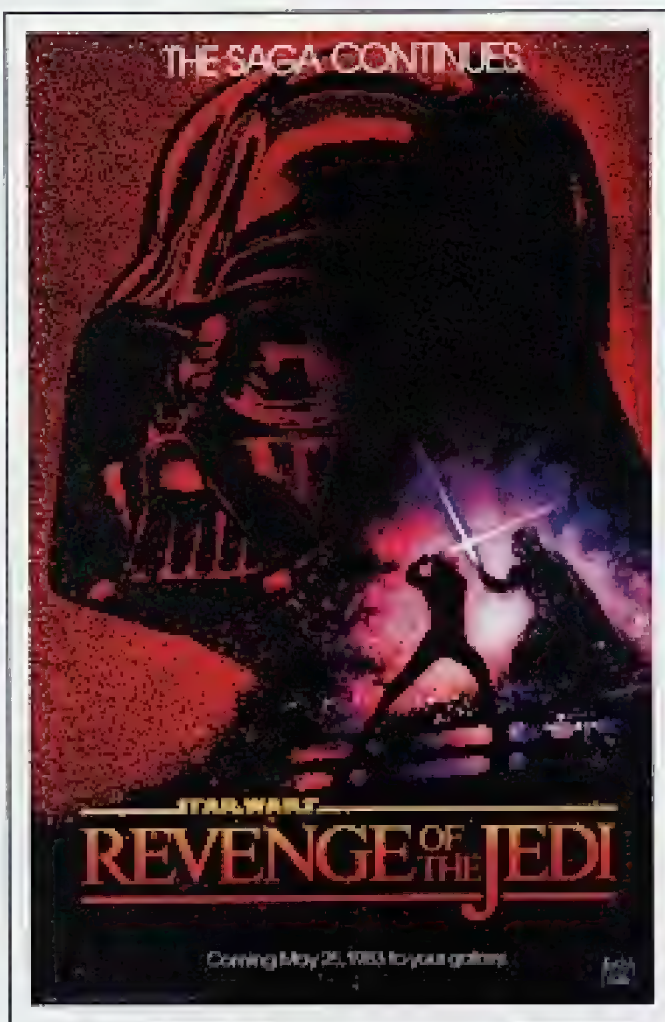
They were the result of laser-scanning technology brought to the Episode II set in Australia by Gentle Giant Studios, which is at the forefront of using scanning, stereo lithography via rapid prototyping machines and some of the best sculptors around to complete the job. The end result will be the most detailed and best-looking *Star Wars* line yet—which is hard to believe, frankly, given the quality of this year's offerings.

We're still a year or so away from the fun and excitement of Episode II, but there will be plenty of collectibles—both old and new—to occupy us before it's time to add some shelf space for the really cool new designs that Hasbro, LEGO® and the other licensees are busily working on for next year. Now, on to your letters.

SEEKING TRUE REVENGE

I've known of your dedication to collecting all things *Star Wars* since the short feature that ran on the Sci-Fi Channel a few years ago. I am quite curious to see what your collection looks like since your move to Northern California and would love to know how the inventorying of it has progressed. A short feature on it in *Insider* would be truly fascinating.

Anyway, the reason I am writing is in hopes of authenticating a *Revenge of the Jedi* poster I purchased a few years ago. It cost about \$300, which I know wasn't cheap, but it was a sort of "holy grail" and I tried to find the most reputable source to purchase it from. I bought it from Empire of Toys in Phoenix, Arizona. It has some wear on the edges and a few dents were it



has been rolled and bumped, but that only makes me think it is genuine simply for its imperfections. The only traces I can see of the printing process are in the blue colors of the fighting Vader. If you look really close you can make out really tiny circles in a uniform pattern.

What do I look for to verify this poster's authenticity?

NATHAN WIJSEN
Mesa, AZ

One of the keys in any high-end purchase is to know, and have trust in, the source. You scored well in that regard. I've known Ron

"IT IS THE STAR WARS ENCYCLOPEDIA! SHOWS LUKE SKYWALKER AND DARTH VADER IN A LIGHTSABER DUEL. BUT LUKE IS WIELDING A RED-BLADED LIGHTSABER AND DARTH IS WIELDING A BLUE ONE."

—JAMES STAPLES

NEW BLOOMFIELD, PA

Lewis, owner of Empire of Toys, for years, and he's one of the best. He'd sooner close his business than knowingly sell bootleg product. The price you bought it for is also fair, although higher prices have been paid at auction. You also didn't say whether you bought the more common *Revenge Advance* with the "Coming May 25, 1983 To Your Galaxy" tag line or the one without. The dated poster, after it was withdrawn from theaters, was offered in a limited quantity through the Official Fan Club, originally for \$100. It is the dated poster that has been bootlegged. More commonly sent to theaters by National Screen Service folded in thirds, the ones offered by the Fan Club and an unknown number sent out directly by Lucasfilm and Fox were rolled. The phony ones are all rolled.

After the title was changed and the news got out, the value of the poster immediately shot up to \$200 on the collectors' market and the bootleggers stepped in.

Fortunately, they didn't do a very good job. The main way to tell a fraud is that the colors around Vader's faceplate and below have migrated from a true deep red to a reddish-orange with yellow creeping in; it is a muddy printing job, not crisp like the original. The light blue 20th Century Fox logo in the lower right is decidedly fuzzy. There haven't been any reports of recent forgeries.

By the way, if you're a neophyte or even an advanced collector of

movie posters, there's a fantastic, free new Internet site that is well worth checking out for its vast storehouse of solid information on posters and poster collecting. Longtime collector Ed Poole put it together, and it's accessible at www.learnaboutmovieposters.com.

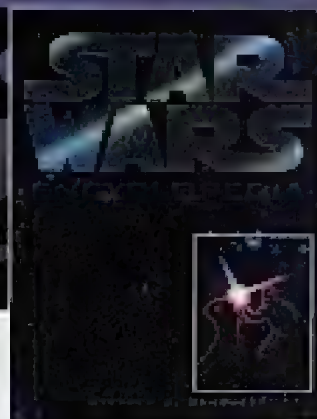
As for my private museum, things are progressing nicely, although there's still a lot of work to do. I hope to share the full story of how a one-time chicken ranch was converted into a new home for my always-growing collection of Star Wars memorabilia later this year.

MORE TALES OF REVENGE

My friend was cleaning out her garage when she found an old Star Wars poster. Knowing what a big fan my boyfriend is, she gave it to him. It's a poster for Jedi, but rather than saying "Return," it says "Revenge." We were just wondering how common these are and, if we were to sell it, how much it would be worth, not that he would part with it—because he treasures all of his Star Wars stuff.

SILVIA & ALFREDO
Hawthorne, CA

Well, Silvia, if you've already read the preceding letter you're probably jumping for joy, thinking you've got at least a \$300 treasure on your hands. But don't jump yet. Maybe you do. But there are some *Revenge* posters that are worth just a few dollars because they are simply



licensed reprints of the famous withdrawn theatrical advance. What's the size of your poster? The collectible one is 27 inches by 41 inches. Does it have any small print at the very bottom margin that says anything like Zig Zag or Portal Press followed by a Lucasfilm copyright line? If it is the right size, and not the bootlegged poster, then the better the condition—rolled, not folded; no tears, rips or pinholes; no tape applied; no dings or bends—the higher the value.

VADER THOUGHT IT WOULD BE FUNNY TO SWITCH SABERS FOR THAT SHOT...

I recently purchased the *Star Wars Encyclopedia* and noticed a mistake on the cover jacket. It shows Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader in a lightsaber duel. But Luke is wielding a red-bladed lightsaber and Darth is wielding a blue one. Is this a mistake on all the jackets or just a particular printing?

JAMES STAPLES
New Bloomfield, PA

Thanks for buying my book, James, but I'm sorry to say you don't have a collectible cover. They're all that way. And they're not a mistake. At least from a certain point of view. And, coincidentally, the issue is related to the *Revenge of the Jedi* poster we've just been discussing.

If you look closely at the *Revenge* poster (and it's really difficult to see at this size) artist Drew Struzan has painted both lightsabers in a bright white, but has backgrounded Vader's in a cloud of blue and Luke's in a light, gaseous red. When that image was reduced and heightened for the encyclopedia cover, the *Del Rey* art director decided to remain true to the original source material. But you aren't the first one to spot the "discrepancy," and I'm sure you won't be the last. Consider it an homage to Drew, who has done so many great pieces of Star Wars and other art for Lucasfilm projects.

GIVE THE KID A BREAK, STEVE! [ed.]

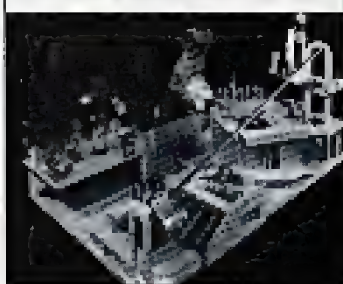
Dear Sir or Madam: In Issue 43 you discussed a build-it-yourself Hoth and Dagobah playset. I am only 12 years old but I would like the plans so I can build it. Can you send me a copy as soon as possible?

NICHOLAS MAKAROWSKI
Merrillville, IN

Dear Nick or Nicholas, I know you are only 12, but when a story begins with a person's name and it is "Steve," (as opposed to, say "Stevie" or even more obviously "Stephanie"), it's a pretty safe assumption that Sir will do. Better yet, you can use the person's name if you're still confused, as in, "Dear Steve," or "Dear Steve Sansweet" to be a bit more formal.

OUTER-SPACE STATION

Here are Star Wars plans to build an orbiting station. These plans include a miniature toy version, and you can download the plans of the station from the website of the Star Wars.

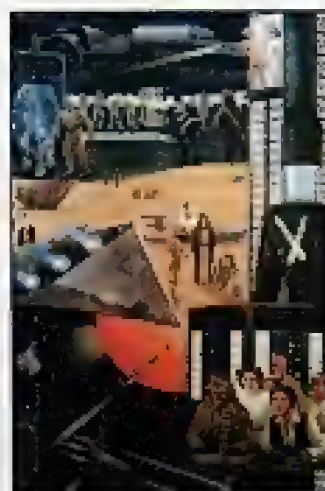


Now that your etiquette lesson for the day is over, the answer to your question is... No. This is a column that provides information about collectibles; it doesn't sell them or have the ability to give them away to people. The object of your desire is a set of plans to build the two playsets that appeared in the November 25, 1980 issue of *Woman's Day* magazine. So that would be, let me see, nearly twice as old as you.

Your best bet to try to dig up a copy of the magazine is in back-issue stores in large cities or at large central libraries that may have *Woman's Day* on microfilm or microfiche. You can also try emailing the Reader Service Department of the magazine (although I don't know if their archives go back that far) at: womansday@hfmamag.com. *Woman's Day* had earlier (Nov. 20, 1978) run plans for what it called an "Outer Space Station" populated mainly by Kenner Star Wars figures. It also sold the plans in a large foldout sheet for \$1. And a revised version of the space station plan with lots of color photos was printed in a hardcover book, *Woman's Day Book of Best-Loved Toys & Dolls*, (1982, Sedgewood Press). This is one of a series of similar books, so be careful you get the right one. The dust-



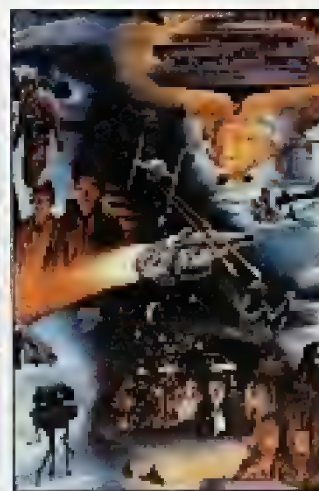
cover has a pink background with plush bears and wooden ladders. You can also search for all of these items on eBay, where I've had good success.



FLEA MARKET FIND

I've been a Star Wars collector since I was five years old. So for the last ten years I've had the chance to build quite a big collection of old and new Star Wars stuff. There are only a few things in my collection that I don't know the value of, and one is original Star Wars wallpaper that I got from my Grandma who bought it at a big flea market for about \$5. It came with a slip of paper that says: Vinyl—Ready-Pasted Wall Vinyl, Made in the United

Kingdom. It also has Star Wars: Registered User stamped in the upper right hand corner. The wallpaper itself is 57 square feet. It looks old and has a collage of



different scenes from *A New Hope* on it. It's in good condition except for the bottom corners, which are a little worn. Is Star Wars antique wallpaper rare? This is the only roll I've ever seen. Did they make wallpaper for the other movies? And how much is my roll worth?

ERIK CHRISTENSON

Menomonie, WI

I'd say your Grandma made a really cool find, although I'd use the word "collectible" rather than "antique," which is generally reserved for items more than 100 years old. Your wallpaper was made by Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd. (ICI) in Cheshire, England. The overall pattern has some key scenes from the film, including Luke and Leia about to swing over the Death Star chasm, the cockpit of the Millennium Falcon, Han battling stormtroopers in front of the Falcon, Ben and the droids in front of Luke's landspeeder, the trench run, etc. You have what is known as a "double roll" in the wallpaper business, which in this case is 21 inches high by 11 yards long; that's the way most wallpaper is sold. The most recent *Tomart's Price Guide to Worldwide Star Wars Collectibles* places a mint, still wrapped double roll at a high of about \$65.

ICI also did similar wallpaper for *The Empire Strikes Back* under the trade name Vynura. The main difference was that the characters' faces—ranging from Luke and Han to Lando and Lobot—were portrayed with much more photographic realism. Key scenes include the battle on Hoth to the surface tranquility of Cloud City. A new licensee, Specialty Wallpapers, sold through Wallpapers to Go, took over for *Return of the Jedi*. It produced several different patterns including an overall movie collage; spacecraft technical drawings in either blue or brown; and *Ewoks* wallpaper in green or yellow. The collage and *Ewoks* papers were sold with optional rolls of borders. ☺

SCOUTING FOR ANSWERS?

Please send your questions and comments about collectibles to: SCOUTING THE GALAXY, P.O. Box 2898, Petaluma, CA 94953-2898. Or you may email them to ewinsider@vixen.com, making sure to put SCOUTING in the subject line. Individual replies aren't possible because of time constraints, but we'll answer the questions of broadest interest in the column. Letters are edited for grammar, sense, and length.

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

have the honor of corresponding with Indiana Jones author Rob MacGregor, who autographed my copy of *Indiana Jones and the Seven Veils*.

In closing, I would like to thank George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, and Harrison Ford, as well as a tremendously talented and dedicated team of filmmakers for creating the greatest movie in the world and for allowing fans to take part in that adventure. And, of course, thank you *Star Wars Insider*. Your magazine brings the world of Lucasfilm home to all of us while making the adventure seem not so far away.

DALE DASSEL
Warner Robins, GA

Nice Oscar speech. Cool costume. But what are you doing in Warner Robins, California? Shouldn't you be in Jonestown, Indiana?

Okay, there is no Jonestown, IN. But there should be, dagnabbit.

MARK HAMILL'S ADDRESS IS...

First of all, what is Mark Hamill's address? I really like Mark Hamill. I have at least ten pictures of him in my room. I think he looks cute in all of his movies. I really hope you can post his address. Also, where can I find the address for Lucasfilm casting? I'd just like to be an extra! That would make me feel happy, standing with all the stars! I'm a girl, and when most of my friends ask me questions about the trilogy, I tell them a whole story! Also, I read in a book that Uncle Owen was Obi-Wan Kenobi's brother. Is that true?

ALLI RICO
Littleton, MA

First of all, are you delighted or mortified that we printed your



Dr. Jones, I Presume?

Members of the Star Wars Fan Club Dassel has spent the past five years (and over \$3,000) making an effort to rescue a lot of Indiana Jones from the long-lost suppliers in England and the United States. He says, "I couldn't have done it without the help of other dedicated Indiana Jones fans who managed to track down all of the information pertaining to the Indiana Jones estate."

letter? Meanwhile, I'll let the good folks at Lucasfilm know that you're available for work on the next film. I suggest you wait by your phone. As for Mark's address, join the Official Star Wars Fan Club and we'll forward your letter to him at no cost. Really!

Owen Lars is not the brother of that "crazy old wizard" Ben Kenobi, but I hear tell that Beru has a thing for ol' Obi. At least, that's what my spies at The Star tell me.

THIRD TIME'S THE CHARM

This is the third time I have written to *Star Wars Insider*, and as far as I know none of my letters have been printed. That's no big deal though, because I love the magazine and will continue to subscribe. I even like Jar Jar Binks.

So many people don't realize how serious and important Jar Jar Binks is. He brought love and humor to the *Star Wars* universe and became an unlikely hero all

at once. The more you watch Episode I, the more you will realize how cool he really is.

Anyway, I don't know whether everyone has seen the made-for-TV movies about the Ewoks, but I have, and I love them. Yes, they are innocent movies that have a family movie feel, and no, there aren't any Jedi Knights or Sith Lords, or even a space battle. Yet I still consider these movies to be *Star Wars* all the way, which would mean that there are in fact eight—yes eight—*Star Wars* titles out there on video (including the cartoon *Droids* and *Ewoks*, which I also enjoy). So my question is, will these wonderful Ewok films ever be available to purchase again? I am dying to have them.

BRYAN GAY
Woodville, TX

I love whimsical, train-of-thought letters. So many wonderful pull-quotes to choose from!

*Embittered movie-goers, myself included, often forget the importance of Jar Jar Binks to the *Star Wars* saga. His loping gait and buffoon's luck have brought hope to thousands upon thousands of clumsy, clumsy children.*

*Let us join hands and pray that Jar Jar is not killed off or brutally maimed in Episode II, for where would the *Star Wars* saga be without laughter and love?*

Where, I ask you?

"I LOST MY BATTLE WITH THE DARK SIDE OF THE FORCE" DECLARES JAMES EARL JONES

I realize this "star sighting" might be outside your parameters at *Insider*, but I'm sending this to you because I don't have any

way of contacting any other staff.

On Friday April 20, 2001, three members of the "501st Legion" costuming group greeted James Earl Jones, the keynote speaker at the luncheon that inaugurated this year's Kentucky Derby Festival in Louisville, KY. George Schlub (TK-1031), Chris Beneke (TK-504), and KY Squadron Leader Chris Skidmore (TK-1028) escorted Mr. Jones to the platform, where they were met with pyrotechnic explosions, strobe lights, and the University of Louisville Symphony Orchestra playing *Star Wars* music. The theme for the Kentucky Derby Festival was "2001 a Festival Odyssey." Other space-themed events were planned for the festival, but James Earl Jones left Kentucky after the luncheon.

Mr. Jones and the planners of the luncheon received special permission from Lucasfilm so that "the voice of Darth Vader" could deliver his entire speech in character as the Dark Lord of the Sith. Jones began his speech by saying, "I was born Anakin Skywalker. I was trained under the great Jedi Master, Obi-Wan Kenobi. I fought many glorious battles, but I lost my battle with the dark side of the Force. I also lost much of my humanity to machines after falling into a molten pit of lava. After that, I could not even breathe on my own." James Earl Jones continued to speak in character even as he spoke about behind-the-scenes events. "James Earl Jones was my voice, and now I am the Master. I am controlling him," he humbly stated. "Lord Vader" also explained that the Force allowed him to see the future (and even joked that he knew who would win the Derby,

but he wasn't going to tell). He then asked the audience to ponder what the future will look like. He posited different paradigms, but by the end of the speech he concluded, "I am the key to the future. I know you thought I was going to say some hero figure like Captain Kirk, but the future cannot be saved by James T. Kirk. I, Darth Vader, am the hope of the future. Why? My children, Luke and Leia, had the courage to do what I did not do. They resisted

the local plant, a back hand-signed by Muhammad Ali (a Louisville native), and the city's highest award: the Jefferson Cup, designed by Thomas Jefferson himself.

CHRIS SKIDMORE
501st Legion, KY

Thank you for the "star sighting," Chris. Even my Lucasfilm-approved restraining bolt couldn't keep me from laughing our loud. We, the humble editor-droids of Star Wars Insider, desire more of these. We will



The Immaculate Mr. Jones

Escorted by a happy bunch of stormtroopers (TK-1031, TK-504, and TK-1028), James Earl Jones treated fans of the 2001 Kentucky Derby to a rousing speech. Speaking in Darth Vader's lesser voice, Mr. Jones implored the audience to make a difference. Mr. Jones also chuckled, "The reports of my immaculate conception are greatly exaggerated, but I digress."

temptation; they did not fall to the easy, evil way of the dark side. They had the courage to fight for the Light! They stood and fought for justice, freedom, and rights. They even helped me change my ways. There is the hope for the future. Yes, you see the answer lies within my children. I am here today to tell you, in that respect, you are all my children."

Jones was presented with a key to the city, a Louisville slugger baseball bat made just for him at

print photos, too. If you can get a photo of a movie star reading a copy of Insider magazine, AND have them sign a release so that it can appear in our magazine, we will pay you \$50 and publish it! Fifty bucks will get you that LEGO Gungan Sub you've had your eye on. Or Kenny Baker, for that matter.

WHAT ABOUT JOE BLOW?

I've been contacting Jawa Trader for months trying to obtain the

Freeze Chamber. Over and over again, I was told that it would be available the following month, and the following month I am told to try next month. Two weeks ago, I tried through the online store. Again, I was told to try next month. The following weekend, I attended a toy show in Kane County Fair Grounds in St. Charles, Illinois. Lo and behold, a dealer had six Freeze Chambers on sale for \$65.00 each. This week, I surfed the net and found other dealers also advertising the Chamber.

Contacting the Star Wars Fan Club by phone to voice my concern, I was informed that the Chamber had been released in Europe. I then got a recording with a message that the recipient will not be available for several months to respond to my concern. So now it's your turn.

I'm a collector, not a dealer. My three-year old daughter, Alexis, has every 12-inch doll produced since '95. My son has every card. We collect as a family and have a good time doing so. Why is it that dealers have access to Star Wars releases such as the Freeze Chamber and average Joe Blow is told to wait month after month? Why have the items been released in Europe where dealers grab hold of those items and then jack up the prices?

DR. ROY STEPHENS
Waukegan, IL

We feel your woe—we really do. Why does the Earth have only one sun, while Tatooine has two? It's just not fair!

But seriously, Doc, the Joe Blows at Insider have had similarly bad luck obtaining the Carbon Freeze Chamber, but we've been told they're in stock now. Take two pills and turn to page 67!

NEXT TO JESUS, YOU GUYS ROCK!

First of all, I have been fascinated with George Lucas's galaxy far, far away since I was a little boy. The first time I saw Episode IV was on video with my family during Christmas. After the movie, I just sat there and stared at the blank TV screen for awhile before yelling out, "Put in the next one!" Then I realized that nature called, so I ran up the stairs to the bathroom, piloting an invisible X-wing and making R2 unit sounds as I went.

Star Wars is my thing, but Jesus is my life. Just wanted to point that out. I finished reading the Rebel Rumblings column in Issue #53 and noticed that fans of Star Wars either love or hate *Insider*. I say that the *insider* has filled my empty void temporarily while waiting for Episode II. Why should people hate this magazine while it continues to provide information that we would never find anywhere else? I say kudos to the *insider* team and all those who make the magazine possible! May the Force be with you!

ERIC COVINGTON
Cedar Falls, IA

GOT CUPS, WANT CASH

OK, I have two *The Empire Strikes Back* cups from Burger King from back in 1980 when the film came out. How much would they be worth?

SOUTH PARK KID
via email

That depends. Do they still contain the original soda pop? If so, you're sitting on a goldmine, kid!



Dog Fight

Our son, Frank, age 6, has been a huge Star Wars fan since age 4. He is an *insider* member as well as an owner of all the movies to date. Our black Labrador, Bees, and he enjoy their "lightsaber battles." We thought you would enjoy the pictures of "Bear Vader" and Frank. Enjoy! We look forward to Episode II.

KYLE, FRANK & BEES STEVENS
Waco, TX



EPISODE I WREAKS HAVOC WITH AMERICAN HISTORY

I was recently thinking about *The Phantom Menace* and wondering why it doesn't move the viewer like the classic trilogy. The reason is that *The Phantom Menace* lacks the grounding in historical truth that underlies the classic trilogy.

The classic trilogy is, on one level, the American Revolution in space. A "ragtag" group of Rebelutionaries fight off a larger military empire, suffer losses and minor defeats, but win the war. In *The Phantom Menace*, however, the viewer is led to believe that Gungans/Indians join forces with the Naboo/13 Colonists to fight off the Trade Federation/British Empire. The historical reality, of course, is that the Indians—primarily Six Nations Iroquois—

joined forces with the British to fight the 13 Colonists. After the Revolutionary War, the nascent 13 Colonists did not live peacefully with the Indians; they rounded them up and "processed" them like the Trade Federation.

Maybe this is why *The Phantom Menace* does not satisfy the viewer like the classic trilogy: because the film lacks historical truth, the viewer's subconscious stirs uneasily at the manipulation of American history.

GARY WRIGHT
Brompton, ON

Uh-huh. I see. Well, that's a fascinating supposition, Gary. While we try to wrap our wamp rat brains around your Canadian "take" on American history, we welcome others to share their theories about Episode I's historical basis.

One of my English professors

once remarked, while speaking of Shakespeare's *Othello*, "It doesn't matter what the author intended or meant to say; it's how we—the audience—interpret the work that gives it meaning." Is *The Phantom Menace* a historical allegory? Did the British Empire spawn the evil Trade Federation? I suppose we could ask George Lucas, but where's the fun in that?

SOPHIE'S CHOICE

My name is Sophie Hood. I am an 8th-grade student at Rooftop Alternative School. When I first saw the original Star Wars movies, I liked them a lot—the story, the characters, everything about them. When Episode I came out, I saw it three times in the theater. For my thirteenth birthday, I received the Episode I novel. When I read it, I realized that I enjoyed reading about the Star Wars universe. Since then, I have read twenty-seven Star Wars novels. This year I received the *Star Wars Insider* for my birthday, and I'm reluctant to say that I was disappointed with some of the things I saw and read.

First of all, I subscribed to *Insider* at the beginning of February. I was told it would take six to eight weeks (for the first issue) to come. Six weeks passed, and the magazine hadn't come. I decided to wait a couple more weeks. My birthday approached and it still hadn't come, even though the newest issue had already been sent out. My mom bought me one from the store, as we were both tired of waiting. I'm writing this letter in April, and my issue still has not arrived. How am I supposed to think highly of a magazine that doesn't deliver? It gives me a low opinion of your

service. Will it take this long for all the other issues to come, too?

I also noticed while reading through the magazine that almost 50% of it consisted of interviews. Now, I have no problem with interviews; in fact, it's a wonderful way to get inside information on tons of different issues. The thing that bothers me is how many interviews there are. It just gets boring after reading pages of interviews. I think that you should add more articles and news stories to the magazine. Combine them with interviews to make a nice mixture of different things.

Your magazine is good, but not perfect. There are many things you should change. Listen to what Star Wars fans have to say; it could make a really big impact on the magazine and its readers.

SOPHIE HOOD
San Francisco, CA

Our apologies for not delivering your first issue in a timely fashion. If you experience problems with your subscription, notify our subscription house, PCS, immediately. Here's their toll-free number and email address:

1-800-692-3836

SWinsider@pcspublink.com

In future issues, we will try to strike a better balance between interviews and articles. In fact, we have several non-interview features planned for the year leading up to Episode II. Meanwhile, if there are any specific articles you would like to see, write us a letter and let us know!

PALPALICIOUS

I have been a member of the Star Wars Fan Club for over a decade now. Every single issue of *insider* has been superb, even with all the changes it's gone through. I

just received issue #53, and what an issue!

I like seeing the change from Senator Palpatine to Chancellor Palpatine. The article on Ian McDiarmid was incredible. The way he looks as Chancellor Palpatine with his older face and black robes sends chills down my spine and gives hints to what he will become.

You guys are doing a great job on such a fantastic magazine! Keep up the good work.

JOHN M. GORE
Terry, MS

SECRET OF THE MYSTERY MOM

When is it OK to write stories about *Star Wars*? Also, do Luke and Leia ever learn anything about their mother?

NATHAN TROXEL
Homewood, IL

You won't get a one-way ticket to the Death Star for writing your own Star Wars stories. However, getting them published is another matter. First, you need to establish yourself as a non-Star Wars fiction author by getting your own stories published in books and magazines. For many new writers, this can be a long and tiring journey, requiring years of dedication to the craft of writing, plenty of hard work, and a bit of good luck.

A lot of mystery surrounds the Skywalker family tree. It took three movies for Luke and Leia to come to grips with the truth about their father; it could take another three movies to learn the facts about their mysterious mom.

A "LACK OF IMAGINATION"

I am writing in support of the letters you printed in the last issue

concerning female *Star Wars* fans.

First let me say, GIRL FANS RULE!

When the first *Star Wars* book by Timothy Zahn came out, I was just as excited as everyone else. However, I was disappointed with what I read. Don't get me wrong: Timothy Zahn is a talented writer, and I have all his *Star Wars* books, but the portrayal of women in these books—Leia in particular—troubles me. Almost all of these

books took Timothy Zahn's story and expanded it. While, in my mind, that shows a lack of imagination, it also stuck Leia's character in a stereotypical role. Leia and Han got married and had "baby Solos," and I wonder why it is automatically assumed that this would happen?

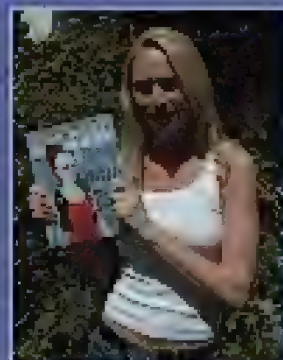
In the Zahn books, Leia becomes less of a central figure and is cast into the roles that



Photo by Tony Stone

Did I Say THAT?!?

Actress Michonne Bourmaque has issues. Her alter ego, Auroa Sing, has been elevated to icon status by *Star Wars* fans and convention-goers alike. Michonne recounts her experiences with Auroa Sing's legion of worshippers in her tell-all 2001 *Convention Diary*, presented in a future issue of *Star Wars Insider*. Fans of the *Star Wars* galaxy's beloved bounty hunter better not miss it—or else!



American society seems more appropriate: that of wife and mother. While there is nothing wrong with getting married and having kids (I know, I work with kids), that is not the only option

for women. Why couldn't Leia still be in love with Han, but not marry him and go on to become a Jedi? To my recollection, the only time Leia ever used her powers in the Zahn books was at the end of the

last one, and that seemed less spectacular compared to the exploits of the male characters.

I have yet to read a *Star Wars* book where the central female character has not, at some point, been placed into a stereotypical woman's role. **THIS IS THE STAR WARS UNIVERSE WE ARE TALKING ABOUT HERE!** Why not try to think outside our "earthbound" conceptions about people and place them in new and unexpected roles?

Why can't somebody write a story that isn't based on Zahn's books? The events after *Return of the Jedi* offer unlimited paths for our heroes (and she-roes) to take. I would like to see a book where Leia is just as great a Jedi Knight as Luke. Until then, the only story I accept is the one that comes from George Lucas.

AMY SMITH
Irvine, CA

One could argue that there is no "profession" more vital or noble as motherhood. It might not seem as romantic or glamorous as, say, the life of a Jedi Knight, but it's no less impressive. Perhaps the fault is not in portraying Leia as a wife and mother, but failing to portray her in these roles more often and more honestly.

Raising three children while holding down a steady job sounds less spectacular than blowing up a Death Star. But consider this: In the novels, Leia becomes a guiding force for her children and surrogate mother for the whole galaxy, fighting to hold both her family and the Republic together at great personal risk. Now that's heroism.

That said, I wouldn't mind seeing an Infinities storyline in which Leia becomes a Jedi Knight!

AREN'T YOU A LITTLE SHORT FOR A DARK LORD OF THE SITH?

Welcome back, *Star Wars Insider*!

An issue or so back, you asked us fans to write in and let you know what we're interested in. It's nice to know what the actors and producers are doing, but on top of that, I'd really like to see more "fan stuff." I like to see how other fans show their attachment to *Star Wars* in the things they build or create—not just artwork, but homemade costumes, dioramas, customized figures, scratch-built models, decorated cakes, creative collection displays, or life-sized sets (like the bridge of the *Executor*). These kinds of things make me feel more in touch with the **REAL** people who love *Star Wars* as much as I do.

To get you started off, I've enclosed pictures of myself dressed in my Vader costume (see right). Aside from the (Don Post Studios) helmet, everything has been hand-crafted out of easy-to-find items. (I've attached an detailed inventory.) Beneath the black mask and armor is yet another female *Star Wars* fan—and a petite one at that. I may only be 5'2" tall, but that will never deter me from portraying my favorite character!

LEE-ANN HONMANN-CROFT
Lynn, MA

*Okay, so the pink curtain isn't quite as formidable as the bridge of the *Executor*, but anyway you cut it, you make a wonderful Darth Vader. We want to showcase more *Star Wars* "fan stuff." We're off to a good start with this Rebel Rumbblings column and our coverage of *Star Wars* community events (page 22). 🖖*



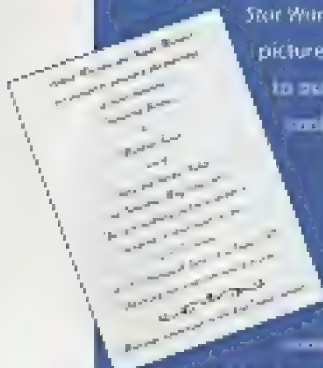
Star-crossed Lovers

We are huge fans of the *Star Wars* films, so we decided to include a non-traditional engagement photo with our wedding invitations. We knew right from the start we wanted to send an invite to our friends at

Star Wars Insider. We would be thrilled if you put our picture in your superb magazine. We want to show it to our kids 30 years from now so they can see how cool their parents were way back when!

KITT & SAMANTHA REBER
Las Vegas, NV

Anakin, Ahsoka, and Anakin will be positively moved! Thanks for the invite and the awesome photo. So is that the father of the bride behind that black veil or what?



Vaderesque

Anyone with enough funds can buy all of the "professionally" made pieces to make a complete Vader suit that rivals the one on screen. Since I prefer to make my own, my costume isn't nearly as perfect as those, but it still gets a lot of attention. There is a certain pride that comes from making rather than buying, and I also enjoy the creative challenge.

I've actually been working on my suit since I was 12 years old. It's been under constant modification ever since.

Here's a head-to-toe run-down of costume parts:

Helmet: Standard Don Post Studios helmet revamped and modified with a battery-powered cooling fan, new lenses, new "grill" and breathing sound FX.

Chest and Shin Armor: Black vinyl placemats cut, layered and glued together.



Chest Box: Wooden plaque from craft store covered with shiny black vinyl. The buttons, "coin slots" and rocker switches are sculpted from polymer clay and painted or wrapped in colored acetate. The coin slots are lit with battery-powered Christmas bulbs. The silver side rods are actually wooden BBQ skewers and craft beads.

Belt Buckle: Thin wooden pieces shaped into the raised silver design mounted to an electrical outlet cover.

Belt Boxes: Wooden trinket boxes from a craft store painted black. The silver buttons are cap screws from a hardware store. The red lights are from an electronics store; the green lights were caps from lipstick tubes, hacksawed down and painted with transparent green stained-glass window paint. Each box is lit with three LEDs powered by a nine-volt battery/resistor.

Cod Piece: Foam core board, thin foam and black vinyl.

The Body Suit: A black vinyl, faux alligator skin two-piece suit (found at a department store).

Capes: Inner cape sewn from black fabric. Outer cape was a lucky thrift store find.

Boots: Hand-me-down riding boots from a friend.

Gloves: Found in a friend's basement.

Gauntlets: Black vinyl stitched in a quilted pattern to give the impression of large cuffs on gloves.

LEE-ANN HOENIGH-CROFT
Lynn, WA



DEAR 2-1B

SPECIAL GUEST: FX-7

Dear Star Wars fans,

The attacks on the integrity of *Star Wars Insider* magazine must stop. As contributing editor of this magazine, I will protect the *Insider* from the misinformation and, frankly, insults that have been printed in this column. 2-1B has gotten completely out of hand, and his brash demeanor will no longer be allowed to go unchallenged.

For this reason, without his knowledge/behind his back, we have brought in medical assistant droid FX-7, one of the distinguished stars of *The Empire Strikes Back*, to offer his thoughtful reflections on your letters. They will follow 2-1B's answers, and hopefully send readers off in a positive direction—not to mention allow FX-7 a chance to defend himself, too, from unwarranted assaults.

I'm sure you'll all be pleased to join me in extending a big *Insider* welcome to FX-7. So keep those cards and letters coming, and may the Force be with you... always.

—Scott Chernoff, contributing editor

Dear 2-1B,

Hey you ungrateful scrap heap. You really have a lot of nerve BASHING the very film series that has been your bread and butter for the last few decades. I mean, have you ever stopped to think where you would be right now if it weren't for a guy by the name of GEORGE LUCAS? Just what were you doing before Mr. Lucas came along and thrust you into POP ICON status? Did you even have a job? It's droids like you that give medicine a bad name. You really need to go to therapy and work out the demons that have made you so bitter toward the people who have made you famous. See ya—wouldn't want to be ya.

STEVE AGEE
Silverlake, CA

2-1B

Goo, you really got me there, Stephen. You really *SHOWED* me how *TOUGH* you are via your *BRILLIANT* use of *CAPITAL LETTERS*. Gee, I wanted to take your statements seriously, but that would require me *CARING*. Seriously, Stacy, of course my data banks have processed the question of where I'd be if it weren't for George Lucas, and the answer is clearly that I would be on top of the world, the biggest and most beloved star in movie history. Think about it, folks. Think about what the cowards who run the *Star Wars Insider* are afraid to print, the side of *Star Wars* that's not as pretty as their latest puff-piece on the "actor" who played Greedo. Here's the unvarnished truth, people, and that truth is that if someone, anyone else would have produced the "Star Wars" trilogy instead of George Lucas, there's no doubt they would have given me a more prominent role and not held me back by sticking me in what turned out to be little more than a glorified cameo. I mean, duh. Who would you put in the lead role—the medical droid who saves the universe by bailing Luke Skywalker out of his self-inflicted "crises," or the overgrown ape who follows Han Solo around like a hairy magnet? Yes, I'm talking about Chewbacca, the "mighty Wookiee." Yeah, real mighty, alright. Mighty *SMELLY*. Obviously, when it comes to the success of the story, Chewie, a co-pilot, contributed less than I, the lead doctor on the surgical procedures that saved a Rebellion. Chewie was to Solo what empty-circuited medical assistant droid FX-7 was to me: an assistant, and *NOTHING* more. You'll also agree that I'm a more engaging character than Chewie, too: I can talk. If George Lucas wouldn't have directed *Star Wars*, then I could have been given my due as a full-time member of the team, and Chewbacca could have gone on to a wonderful career in *Harry and the Hendersons* and films of that ilk. Chew on that, Star "Bones" *Insider*.

And yes, Starsky, I did have a job before the movies. It's called "doctor." Maybe you oughta see one — *FOR YOUR HEAD*.

FX-7

Hi, this is FX-7, medical assistant droid. First of all, I just want to say that it is an honor to be asked to write for any Lucasfilm publication, but to follow my mentor, and the officer under whom I served in the Battle of Hoth, is a pretty big thing, and I just want to thank the magazine, the readers, and 2-1B for the opportunity to serve. I love *Star Wars Insider*!

Now, to your letter. Well, gosh, Mr. Agee, I don't really know whether to answer this as me or as 2-1B, since it's kind of personal and I was told these would be general advice questions. Well, if it's me, I'm sorry if anything I did bothered you, and I promise I'll try to do better from now on. But if you're referring to 2-1B, I'm sure you just don't know the real 2-1B, only the glamorous figure you see on screen. He's a really good doctor and works really hard and stuff. Before he became famous, 2-1B was working hard as a medical droid, and yes, I'm sure he thinks a lot about where he'd be without Mr. Lucas' help, and I'm sure he thanks the maker every day for his good fortune.

You seemed kind of sad, so I wanted to share with you one of my sure-fire cures for the blues: Have you seen Episode I yet? Because if you haven't, I can tell you that one real good way to feel more upbeat is to pop that little fighter into the VCR and enjoy a good two hours of movie magic. I really love The Phantom Menace, and I bet you will too!

Dear 2-1B,

I know that if you had the chance, you'd love to tell stories about your work for the Rebellion. Instead of complaining about your lot in life, maybe you can regale us with more stories of your exploits as a medical droid. What do you say? I'm listening.

RAY HOOEY
Santa Rosa, CA

2-1B

So glad you're "listening," Captain Hooey. Listening to a piece of paper. Say, as long as you are listening to this inanimate object, I want you to hear me loud and clear. So hold the paper up to your ear, and listen hard. Shhh. Keep listening. Don't say another word. Ever. Maybe one day you will be able to "listen" to this magazine tell you something, and when that day comes, Raymond, you will hopefully be in a padded room and far from me, because **YOU CAN'T LISTEN TO A MAGAZINE.** There are no sound cards, only subscription cards. You almost remind me of an assistant I had once who was not very memorable, but I believe his name was FX-something-or-other. In any case, this droid had no eyes and no ears, just a bunch of freakish sensor arms that spindled out like a bunch of swizzle sticks. I mean this guy was weird. Yet this talentless bucket of bolts proved to have a mean streak, and he connived his way into juicy assignments and plush starships. You, too, have this mean streak, Gary. It seeps through your words like an oozing oil leak from a faulty FX-7 droid. You want to know about my past, Greg? You think I need to prove my credentials **TO YOU?** To Greg Hooey of Nowheresville, USA? You know something, buddy, I'm going to introduce you to a new concept for you: books. Star Wars Encyclopedia. Essential Guide to Characters. Visual Dictionary. It's all there in the literature, in the history of the Star Wars universe. You can read all about me—I have nothing to hide. And when you do read, Huey, you will read stories of heroism that will blow your mind, and you will wonder, when will the lackeys at Star Wars Insider, who stick me in the last pages of the magazine where only nerds and little kids are still reading, realize and accept that I am an integral part of this saga, the glue that holds the fabric of the Star Wars universe—and hence, their little magazine—together? The next thing you know, they'll start letting FX-7 write for the magazine. Trust me, sister, on that day, you've seen the last of 2-1B. I will walk right

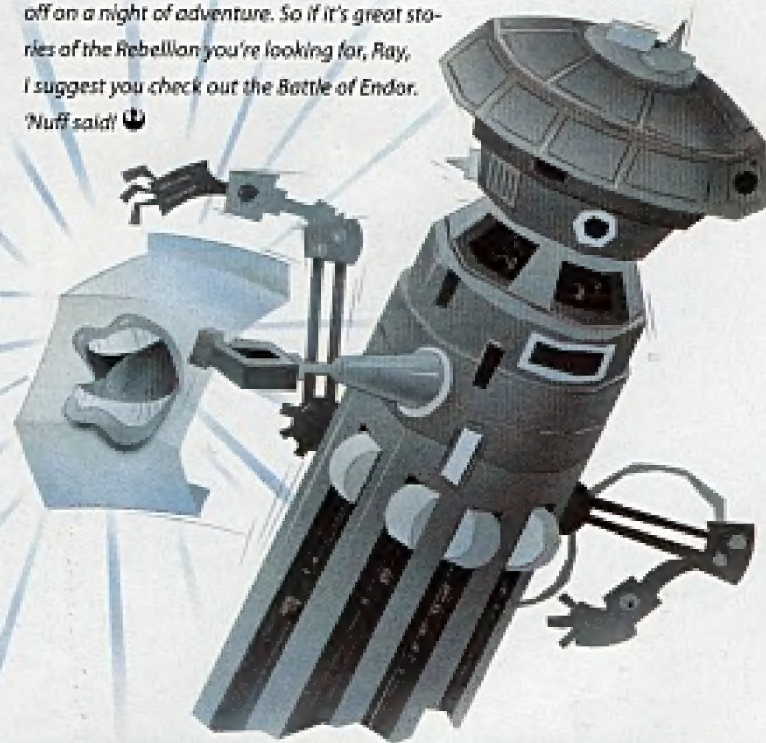
out of here. Quit. And nothing, except more money and choice convention slots, and I mean **NOTHING**, will change my man-made mind.

FX-7

Hmm, stories of the Rebellion, huh? Um, well, once again, I can't really speak for 2-1B here, so I'll try to field this one myself. Hmm, stories of my work for the Rebellion... the Rebellion... OK, well, one day, I got to use all of my sensor arms, but it was only because I was being used to help inventory the medical supplies. I mean, it's not like I've seen battle or anything. I'm just an anonymous little medical assistant droid trying to do his best every day. I guess if I had to pinpoint one event that was important in my career, it was assisting 2-1B in the treatment of a very important Rebel leader, who shall go nameless due to doctor-patient confidentiality. (After all, I don't know if Luke wants everyone to know he has a fake hand.) But I'll just say that it was a true honor to contribute in even a tiny way on some routine procedures for a very good and nice Jedi Knight.

But what's more rewarding about my job are the little things—changing the bacta in the tank, logging the results of my medical diffraction scanner, and just helping those who are alone, sick, and in need of a little comfort. If I can brighten the day of one patient, I think it's all worthwhile.

By the way, Ray (hey, that rhymes!), have you seen the Return of the Jedi Special Edition? Remember how they took out that old disco song from Jabba's Palace and replaced it with the immortal "Jedi Rocks"? I loved that, didn't you? If I'm feeling low, Jedi is just the ticket to blast me off on a night of adventure. So if it's great stories of the Rebellion you're looking for, Ray, I suggest you check out the Battle of Endor. 'Nuff said! ☺



NEED ADVICE?

GOT A QUESTION NOBODY ELSE WILL ANSWER?

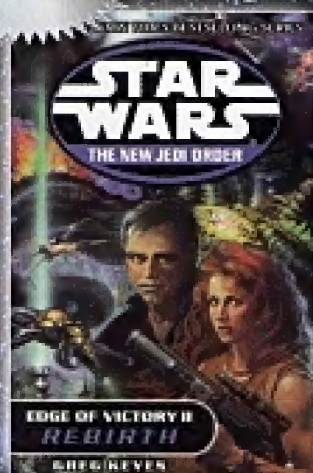
Write to: **DEAR 2-1B** c/o **REBEL RUMBLINGS**, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057, or e-mail TwoOneBee@aol.com. If your mail is for FX-7, please put "Dear FX-7" in the subject heading. All mail **MUST** include your full name and home city. Letters may be edited for clarity and space considerations. Star Wars Insider is not responsible for any unsolicited material received. The views of 2-1B and FX-7, medical droids allied with the Rebellion, do not necessarily reflect those of Star Wars Insider or Lucasfilm Ltd.



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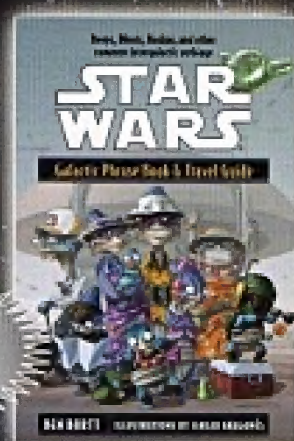
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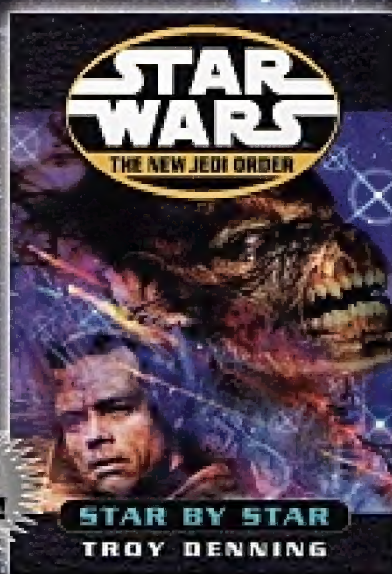
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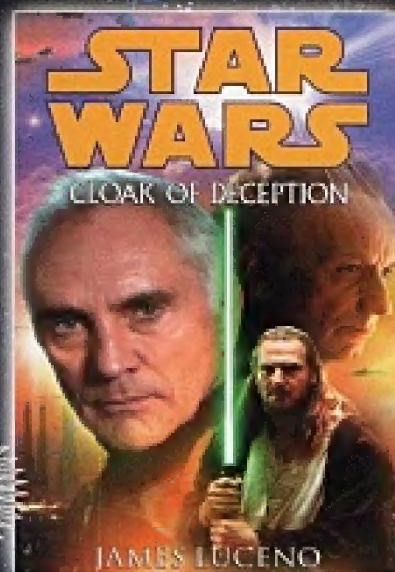
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